

BILLY GRAHAM AND THE END OF EVANGELICAL UNITY

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Fundamentalism is a religious movement which arose in the late nineteenth century espousing conservative, orthodox theology, and opposing the liberalism which was growing within American Protestantism. During the 1920s the fundamentalists engaged in an unsuccessful effort, the modernist-fundamentalist controversy, to rid American churches of liberal, non-orthodox influence. By 1940 fundamentalism had become strongly separatist, organized in a great variety of explicitly orthodox fellowships, and convinced that the main-line denominations were apostate. Through that time "fundamentalism" was often used to describe conservative evangelicalism generally, and there was a broad spiritual unity among orthodox believers, typified in the founding of the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE). The NAE initially included within its leadership strong separatists, such as Bob Jones and John R. Rice, but was primarily led by men fully orthodox but less separatist, such as Harold John Ockenga. This study examines the process through which the unity of that conservative evangelicalism ended, producing two movements: evangelicalism and fundamentalism.

Following their defeat in the denominational wars of the 1920s the fundamentalists worked in relative isolation, little noticed by those outside their group. In the years just after World War II, several fundamentalist evangelists began to succeed in attracting large crowds to evangelistic meetings. This trend was climaxed by the emergence of Billy Graham in 1949. Once again the fundamentalists had a spokesman who could fill stadiums, and speak to a national audience. They looked forward to a renewal of the crusade against liberalism. Graham's roots were in fundamentalism; in the early years he worked with Rice, Jones, and other fundamentalists; and his message was the fundamentalist gospel. Graham soon found, however, that it would be possible to enlist the main-line denominational churches to support his crusades if he moderated his fundamentalist stance. While he continued to preach the gospel, mention of "theological error" was eliminated from his message, and he moved toward ties with the broader church. Fundamentalists urged separation from all non-orthodox, religious leaders, but generally continued to support Graham, until he became identified with the "new evangelicals."

Between 1946 and 1956 the new evangelicals, led by men such as Ockenga, Carl F. H. Henry, and Edward John Carnell, emerged as a group. Encouraged by the over-throw of liberalism by neo-orthodoxy, the conservative mood of post-war America, the "revival of religion" of the 1950s, and the success of Graham, the new evangelicals hoped to remake fundamentalism, rendering its orthodox theology a viable competitor in the modern market. They wished fundamentalism to be less dogmatic in theology, more open to "conversations" with non-orthodox theologians,

more concerned with social problems, and less insistent about matters of external ethics. They wanted greater emphasis on scholarship, and boosted their position by ridiculing the separatist fundamentalists, pressing their case through such magazines as Eternity, Christian Life, and Christianity Today. Graham had attempted to retain fundamentalist support, but during 1956 he fully identified himself with the new evangelical campaign against fundamentalism, and in preparations for his New York crusade worked closely with the non-orthodox, Protestant leadership. Fundamentalists responded with sustained attacks on Graham and the new evangelicals.

Though aggressive in evangelism and growing numerically, fundamentalism emerged from the conflict in near total isolation, withdrew from all except separatist organizations, and placed even greater emphasis on those distinctives to which the new evangelicals had objected.

Many conservative evangelicals rejected parts of the new evangelical program, but most refused to withdraw support from Graham and thus fell into the "evangelical" group. With the fundamentalists eliminated, the new evangelicals solidified their position, and evangelicalism moved steadily in the direction which they had wished.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

During the last quarter of the nineteenth century many factors came to bear on the American situation which together successfully challenged the dominant position of conservative orthodoxy within many Protestant denominations. Many historians have pointed to that period as a watershed in American history. During those years the importation of ideas from Europe, and the domestic elaboration of those ideas, prompted the overthrow of accepted systems in many areas. In economics, politics, and religion the new ideas challenged the old. In American Protestantism a movement called "fundamentalism" arose to oppose those new ideas in religion.

Usually identified as "liberalism" or "modernism," the complex of new religious ideas was based upon German biblical criticism and a religious rationalism. Among the important elements of religious liberalism were the following: de-emphasis and even denial of the supernatural, skepticism concerning the reliability of the Christian scriptures as a record of historical events and rejection of any claim of supernatural inspiration, optimism concerning human nature and the possibility of perfecting man through education, rejection of the concept that human nature was in a "fallen" state and therefore in need of some kind of supernatural salvation, denial of virtually all traditional Christian doctrine, and presentation of Jesus as a great teacher and example. Religious liberalism often associated itself with

political and social liberalism, and liberals, believing that the key to improving the condition of man was to improve his environment, were often active in promoting plans for social engineering.

Set off sharply from this liberalism was the fundamentalism which came into being to oppose it. Shaped largely through a series of prophetic conferences in the 1870s and 1880s, fundamentalism joined a strong biblical literalism with an apocalyptic, premillennial eschatology and by the turn of the century had a well-developed ideology on which to base its attack against liberalism. Fundamentalism cannot be identified by any doctrinal description, despite the enthusiasm of all fundamentalists for constructing doctrinal statements. George W. Dollar, a foremost fundamentalist historian, defines historic fundamentalism as the "literal exposition of all the affirmations and attitudes of the Bible and the militant exposure of all non-Biblical affirmations and attitudes."¹ The most important thing to understand about fundamentalists is that they believe themselves to be the representatives of biblical Christianity, and they insist that a divinely inspired Bible gives them authority for such a claim. Doctrinally, fundamentalists subscribe to what can be defined as traditional, Protestant orthodoxy. They assert vigorously belief in the inspiration of the Bible, the direct creation of man by God as described in Genesis, the fall of man in Adam, God's provision for the salvation of mankind through the death of His sinless, virgin-born Son, Jesus Christ, the bodily resurrection of Christ and His Second Coming, and salvation through personal faith in Jesus Christ.² However, many Christians believe these same doctrines but would not be described as fundamentalists.

At no point has fundamentalism been a well-organized movement, and at no point has an exact description of its boundaries been possible. In the early years fundamentalism shaded evenly into general conservative Protestantism, but fundamentalists eventually became an isolated group.

During the early years of the century religious leaders of liberal views had moved into positions of influence within most of the major denominations, but in the years following the First World War fundamentalists made strong efforts to reverse the trend and to reserve leadership positions for those of orthodox theology. These efforts were unsuccessful, but the struggle over the denominations blended with the secular-religious conflict over evolution, which climaxed in the famous Scopes trial of 1925, to be called the fundamentalist-modernist controversy. During the fundamentalist-modernist conflict the conservatives lost nearly every major battle, and eventually the liberals not only retained their right to positions of leadership within the major denominations, but gained control over most of them. Most conservatives adjusted to the new situation and remained within their denominations. A considerable number, however, left to form new groupings led by staunch fundamentalist spokesmen who often had been ejected from the denomination because of their loud criticism of liberalism. They also formed countless organizations to facilitate fundamentalist fellowship and to advance evangelism and the attack upon liberalism. Of these the World's Christian Fundamental Association has received the most attention. Formed in 1919 as the result of a prophetic conference the previous year, this organization directed many of the fundamentalist activities

through the height of the fundamentalist-modernist controversy. It was guided through much of its thirty-year history by William Bell Riley, long-time pastor of First Baptist Church, Minneapolis, Minnesota, though after 1940 its influence greatly diminished. During the late 1930s and the early years of the Second World War fundamentalism was generally in disorder. The last great denominational struggle of the era occurred among the Presbyterians during 1935 and 1936, and again the fundamentalists lost. J. Gresham Machen, who had led a group of orthodox scholars in leaving Princeton to found Westminster Theological Seminary in 1929, was in 1936 ousted from his denomination when he led in the establishment of a conservative foreign mission board which operated in competition with that of the denomination. By this time it was clear that the contest for control of the denominations was over, and that the conservatives would not be able to renew the battle. Most fundamentalists concentrated their efforts in local projects, church evangelism, and a great variety of small, non-denominational fundamentalist organizations. At the same time certain fundamentalists were again trying to frame national fundamentalist organizations. The discussions surrounding the establishment of two national organizations would reveal important differences among fundamentalists concerning the approach to be taken in the new situation. In 1940 it was still quite appropriate to speak of fundamentalists, conservative evangelicals, or "Bible-believing Christians" when referring to roughly the same group of people. It is the purpose of this study to examine the process whereby conservative evangelicalism became divided into evangelicalism and fundamentalism.

Both the American Council of Christian Churches (ACCC or ACC) and the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) were founded during 1941. Both were strongly orthodox in theological position. The American Council of Christian Churches was founded by Carl McIntire and most directly followed in the steps of the early fundamentalists. A strongly separatist group, the American Council made opposition to the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America (FCCCA or FCC) its major activity. The Federal Council had been formed in 1908 and was primarily a vehicle through which liberal churchmen hoped to mobilize the churches for their program of social action. McIntire was one of those forced out of the Presbyterian church in 1936 with Machen and remains one of the more controversial and sensational fundamentalists. More often than other fundamentalists, he receives attention from the national news media because of his involvement in "patriotic" activities. McIntire's position was that complete separation from the main-line denominations was necessary, and the American Council included only denominations which enforced orthodoxy within their ranks. More complex than the American Council of Christian Churches was the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE). That organization included a wider range than did the American Council. It has always included a large number of separatist fundamentalists, and in the early years important separatists, such as Bob Jones, were among its leadership. Also within its leadership were men who were orthodox in belief but less separatist in temperament. In time the NAE moved toward a softer position, and the strong fundamentalists withdrew. Even in the announced purposes of the organization the desire was clearly stated that the claims of

sound doctrine might be presented with less unpleasantness than often was the case in fundamentalist controversy. An important result of the division which this study examines is that fundamentalists and evangelicals no longer work together in such organizations as the National Association of Evangelicals.

The development of the National Association of Evangelicals and of conservative evangelicalism would be much affected by a movement which was just beginning in the late forties. The establishment of Fuller Seminary in Pasadena, California, in 1947, under the leadership of Harold John Ockenga, Presbyterian pastor of Boston's Part Street Church, provided a center for the discussion of the weaknesses of fundamentalism. In the next few years an able group of young scholars became associated with the Fuller effort to refashion fundamentalism. Most important among these were Carl F. H. Henry, Harold Lindsell, and Edward John Carnell. At Fuller was developed the concept of the "new evangelicalism" which would replace fundamentalism, preserving its adherence to sound doctrine, but correcting its misplaced emphases.

New evangelicalism was designed to present orthodoxy in a form more competitive than pugnacious fundamentalism. It hoped to avoid the stigma which had fallen upon the fundamentalist label. Orthodoxy was to be rendered intellectually respectable by the appearance of concessions to the scientific viewpoint. This first surfaced in a book by Bernard Ramm published in the fall of 1954, The Christian View of Science and Scripture.³ This would necessitate a "reopening" of the question of the inspiration of Scripture, though this was always approached with extreme caution. An increased emphasis on scholarship

was planned to avoid charges of obscurantism. New evangelicalism was to place new emphasis upon social responsibilities, which, it was charged, fundamentalism had failed to do. Although during the period of this study, little beyond conservative pronouncements on controversial social-economic-political issues were ever made by new evangelical spokesmen, considerable energy was expended in calling for evangelical involvement in this area.

New evangelicalism planned the greatest changes in the area of the relations of conservative evangelicals to liberal theologians. Fundamentalists had always held liberal theologians in considerable contempt, basing their attack on liberal spokesmen on biblical injunctions concerning separation from false religious teachers. Fundamentalists believed that the defeat of the conservatives in the great denominational struggles of the 1920s was due primarily to the reluctance of Christians to become involved in controversy. They believed that there were generally more orthodox believers among the membership of the churches than confirmed liberals, but that the conservative believers had not acted to keep the liberals from positions of influence until they had lost control of the organization. Fundamentalists therefore held that constant vigilance was necessary lest any form of non-orthodoxy gain a foothold in any orthodox organization. The new evangelicals saw the situation differently. Most of them looked forward to the restoration of orthodoxy to a position of respectability inside the major denominations. They spoke confidently of the conservative swing in the churches, and produced analyses which exaggerated the similarity of dialectical theology to evangelical orthodoxy. They felt orthodoxy must be

maintained, but a less strident tone should be adopted for theological debate. They spoke of new approaches to theologians of other viewpoints, and strove earnestly to earn the respect of non-evangelical theologians. New evangelicals stressed the contribution of neo-orthodoxy in dethroning liberalism, while fundamentalists saw in neo-orthodoxy a more dangerous form of liberalism.

The new evangelicals eventually made against the fundamentalists many of the charges which liberals had long made. They exhorted the fundamentalists to make greater demonstration of Christian love, while ridiculing them for their insistence on maintaining doctrinal separation. The fundamentalists became even more bitter toward the new evangelicals than toward the liberals.

While these differing opinions had long existed within conservative evangelicalism, they had remained submerged, and evangelicals and fundamentalists had worked together in a great many organizations. Only in the 1950s as the new evangelicals began to urge their convictions upon others through the evangelical press did the controversy become heated. They did so because by that time they began to feel that the opportunity existed for returning orthodoxy to a position of respect within the mainstream of Protestant theological discussion. The late forties had witnessed a resurgence of conservative evangelical activity, with numerous conservative evangelists attracting wide attention. The emergence of Billy Graham in 1949 and his rapid rise to national prominence had set the stage for the division within conservative evangelicalism.

The doctrine of "separation" had assumed an important place in fundamentalist preaching. Fundamentalists insisted that the Bible demanded strict separation from those religious teachers who denied essential elements of the faith. They had come to believe that it was failure to observe the doctrine of separation which had allowed liberalism to grow in the denominations and which eventually resulted in the ouster of the fundamentalists. Fundamentalist leaders spent many hours detailing applications of the doctrine of separation. One typical fundamentalist spokesman charged churchgoers to have nothing to do with "false prophets" in the following words: "To associate with them in any way; to fellowship with them in any program; to give them the benefit of any support, moral or material; to belong to their churches; to lend them your influence; to give them the slightest indication of recognition, respect or honor; is to ignore, deny and disobey the plain teaching of the Bible and to compromise with the forces of Satan and Hell!"⁴

The roots of Billy Graham were deep in fundamentalism, and in the early years his pulpit ministry fully reflected that fact. His rise to national prominence was generally hailed by fundamentalists as an answer to their prayers for the restoration of mass evangelism and orthodoxy to a place of importance in national life. His work had been with fundamentalist organizations, and he had been a speaker at many fundamentalist functions. He had spoken against "apostasy" as strongly as other fundamentalists, and there was little to indicate that he would become the center of a struggle which would cause great bitterness among conservative Christians. Eventually Billy Graham

came to be the issue in the division of conservative evangelicalism. This would take time, however, for fundamentalists would be slow to reject a spokesman who for the first time in many years could present their case before a national audience. Fundamentalists such as John R. Rice, who had campaigned for years for the return of mass revivalism, would only with great reluctance turn against an evangelist who could fill a stadium with thousands and thousands of people. For long, Rice, and other fundamentalists, saw Graham in the classic role of fundamentalist evangelist and rejected the charges by Carl McIntire that the young evangelist did not measure up to fundamentalist ideology. McIntire pointed to Graham's association with non-evangelical ecclesiastical figures, and to his disinclination to jeopardize his wide support by strong attack upon error. Still, Rice and most fundamentalists continued to support Billy Graham warmly.

Billy Graham had always solicited fundamentalist support, and had waved aside accusations concerning his relations with non-evangelical ecclesiastics, but in the spring of 1956 he began a course which would certainly divide the conservative camp. Graham fully and publicly identified himself with those who were promoting the new evangelicalism, at the same time rejecting the fundamentalist label. He took a position in an internal dispute within the Southern Baptist Convention completely endorsing the denomination's viewpoint and rejecting the fundamentalist contentions. In October of 1956 the journal Christianity Today appeared and was known to reflect the views of Billy Graham and the new evangelicals. No longer could any fundamentalist imagine that Graham fully endorsed the fundamentalist position.

Christianity Today clearly set forth this new evangelical position as an alternative to fundamentalism. New evangelicalism was presented as a moderate middle position, avoiding the extremes of both classic liberalism and fundamentalism. The new evangelicals never arrived at a consistent evaluation of neo-orthodoxy, though they were warmer in their comments toward that group than toward any other. The editors of Christianity Today generally spent much time on the thought of Karl Barth, considering such theologians as Emil Brunner, Rudolph Bultmann, Paul Tillich, and Reinhold Niebuhr little more than nuisances and obstructions to the picture of the conservative swing in the churches which they were constantly describing.

By the time of the Billy Graham Crusade in New York City, which opened in May of 1957, the split between the new evangelicals and the fundamentalists was virtually complete. During the preparations for the crusade it became clear that Graham had cast his lot fully with the broader church, and non-orthodoxy was fully represented in the crusade committees. Graham spoke against the fundamentalists in an interview in Christian Life magazine, and challenged the National Association of Evangelicals at the annual meeting of that organization in Buffalo, New York, to avoid the narrow extremism of fundamentalism.

The fundamentalists launched a full-scale attack against Graham, urging withdrawal of support from his crusades. Fundamentalist journals rehearsed Graham's career, repeated his many pledges not to allow non-orthodox churchmen any leadership positions in the campaign, and pointed out that these men now held many places of honor within the crusade.

Fundamentalists characterized Graham's position as being that the end justifies the means. Article after article was now printed in the Sword of the Lord, the Christian Beacon, and other fundamentalist papers criticizing Graham, the New York campaign backing, and the total program of new evangelicalism. Throughout the next months, bitter controversy continued between the new evangelical supporters of Graham's ecumenical evangelism and the fundamentalists. Most conservative evangelicals found it easier to support Graham. His enormous personal popularity and the magnificence of his success were in most cases the deciding factors. Those who attempted to remain neutral in the dispute generally found their way to the Graham side. Those fundamentalists who had worked in the National Association of Evangelicals and had taken a more moderate stance on some issues than that of the American Council of Christian Churches were pushed far toward the McIntire group. Many conservative evangelical organizations were disrupted by the dispute, and some denominations, such as the Conservative Baptists, suffered severe internal dissension. The National Association of Evangelicals was able to take no consistent position, though it was generally sympathetic toward Graham. Had the issue been new evangelicalism, rather than Billy Graham, the fundamentalists would have been much stronger within the NAE, but when the question⁴ was presented as support or non-support for Graham, only those truly grounded in fundamentalist conviction would take the fundamentalist side.

By the end of the New York crusade it was clear that Graham would in the future work primarily with the established churches. Christianity Today reported after each crusade that the "great central

segment" of the church was more united than ever before. Some working relationship with the neo-orthodoxy that was dominant had been arranged, and the pattern of New York was followed in city after city. While the Graham organization and most of the religious press pointed to this unity of the great central segment, fundamentalists insisted that the lack of any sound doctrinal basis for this activity exposed evangelical churches to the danger of contamination by these non-evangelical sources. The fundamentalist warnings were heeded by few, however, and the fundamentalists found themselves more isolated than ever. The deep sense of alienation which is part of fundamentalism was furthered, and the minority mentality of the group was reinforced. As the decade of the 1950s ended Graham had become a spokesman for the established churches, and fundamentalism had virtually ceased to be visible.

NOTES

CHAPTER 1

¹George W. Dollar, A History of Fundamentalism in America (Greenville, S. C.: Bob Jones University Press, 1973), p. xv.

²J. Gresham Machen, Christianity and Liberalism (New York: Macmillan, 1926).

³Bernard Ramm, The Christian View of Science and Scripture (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1954).

⁴Robert Wells, "False Prophets," Sword of the Lord, September 17, 1954, XX, 10.

CHAPTER 2

THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF EVANGELICALS

Early in the 1940s two organizations came into being which would attempt to unite evangelicals on an interdenominational basis. The earliest was the American Council of Christian Churches (ACCC or ACC) founded and dominated by Carl McIntire. The ACC was a militant opponent of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America (FCCCA or FCC) and its primary activity often seemed to be direct attack upon that organization. Because of the stridency of its attack on the Federal Council of Churches and the disinclination of many evangelicals to follow the leadership of McIntire there was widespread sentiment that another agency of evangelical unity was needed. Out of this concern the National Association of Evangelicals came into being.

In 1942 a number of evangelical leaders met at the Coronado Hotel in St. Louis, Missouri, and laid definite plans for the formation of a national organization which would function in behalf of conservative evangelicalism.¹ The New England Fellowship, an evangelical organization, had earlier been built by J. Elwin Wright, recognized as the founder of the NAE, and the NAE naturally drew considerable inspiration from that effort. In May of 1943 the constitutional convention of the National Association of Evangelicals met in Chicago, and the organization began to take shape as well as to elaborate its distinctive position.

At the time of the St. Louis meeting, the basic position of the organization, to the left of the American Council of Christian Churches but far to the right of the Federal Council of Churches, had been established. Efforts were made at that time by the McIntire group to bring these men into the ACC, but they were not successful. McIntire insisted that all who wished to join the ACC must withdraw from the FCC. Many of the men involved in the formation of the new group were members of denominations which were part of the FCC and were not disposed to withdraw from their denominations. Other procedural issues were involved, but the major difficulty was McIntire's insistence on complete separation from any connection with the FCC and from any denomination which was a member of the FCC. All attempts at compromise failed, and it seemed that many preferred to remain out of the McIntire orbit. One proposal offered was a compromise that included groups connected with the FCC if they were willing formally to go on record as repudiating the FCC. This proposal was rejected by the majority of the NAE leaders. Dr. Stephen Paine, who voted with the majority in 1942 and was several times president of the NAE, stated in 1951 that excessive shyness on the part of the NAE men at the meeting in 1942 may have lost an opportunity for the unity of evangelicals in one organization facilitated by recognition of the FCC as a common enemy.²

Early in the constitutional convention held in Chicago in 1943, the differences between the NAE and the American Council of Christian Churches were publicly developed. Dr. J. Elwin Wright, the founder and executive secretary of the newer organization, claimed the "great mass of thoughtful and earnest Christians" approved the determination

to "work constructively on the great problems which the church faces," and went on, "They do not approve of a negative approach to the problem of modernism. Nevertheless, they are solidly with us in our effort to place the issues of apostasy before the nation." After recognizing in two sentences the contribution of the fundamentalist leaders of the past who "raised their voices against the encroachments of modernism," he declared,

However, we had better frankly admit that fundamentalists have not always been wisely led. This movement will have to live down the errors in strategy of others in the past. We will continue to meet with defeat . . . unless a new strategy under competent leaders is evolved.

Some of us have been slow to realize that not all modernists are hopeless apostates. May God give to us the ability to discern that we may save, through our gentleness and brotherly kindness, in dealing with them, some of these who are in a state of confusion.³

This was to be the stance of the new organization, united witness to the "historic evangelical faith," spelled out in a carefully drawn statement of faith, but without the bitter and constant criticism of the liberal leaders of the FCC and the mainline denominations which absorbed much of the time of McIntire's ACC. At the Chicago meeting a NAE leader described the statement of faith which had been adopted:

One: "We believe the Bible to be the inspired, the only infallible, authoritative Word of God." On that position, Protestantism must rest if she is to continue to be the church of Christ.

Two: "We believe there is one God, eternally existent in three Persons--the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit."

Three: "We believe in the deity of Christ, in His virgin birth, in His sinless life, in His miracles, in His vicarious and atoning death, in His bodily resurrection, His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and in His personal return in power and glory." This is our clear affirmation of our faith in the deity of Christ, not merely His divinity. There are those who declare that they believe in the divinity of Christ Jesus, meaning by this that both we and He have divinities, but asserting

that the divinity which is in Christ is present in larger measure than in any other being. Our position is clearly this: That we believe in the deity of Christ; that is His being of the very essence of God, the Son of God, the First Begotten from the dead.

Four: "We believe that because of man's lost and sinful condition, regeneration by the Holy Spirit is absolutely necessary for salvation."

Five: "We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit, by whose indwelling the Christian is enabled to live a godly life."

Six: "We believe in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost. They that are saved unto the resurrection of life and they that are lost unto the resurrection of damnation."

Seven: "We believe in the spiritual unity of believers in Christ."⁴

Certainly, the NAE men did not consider themselves "soft on apostasy." Indeed, throughout the early years liberal spokesmen rarely made any great distinction between the men of the NAE and those of the ACC. Further, the presence among the NAE leadership of old-time defenders of the faith, such as Bob Jones, and the amount of time spent in denunciation of liberalism, clearly placed the organization in the theological spectrum. In the published report of the constitutional convention of 1943, in answer to the question: "What is the attitude toward the ACC?" it was stated in part, "Doctrinally there is no disagreement between the American Council and the N. A. E. The leadership and policy of the American Council are not satisfactory to the great body of evangelicals. . . . its policy of indiscriminate criticism contributes to the defeat of its own purposes." At the same time the Federal Council, because of its "lack of a positive stand on the essential doctrines of the Christian faith, its inclusion of leaders who have repudiated these doctrines, and its active support of programs and institutions which are non-evangelical or apostate, does not represent the evangelicals of America."⁵

During the early years of the organization, the leaders of the NAE generally refrained from extensive public criticism of the American Council. At times harsh words were spoken and often accusations by the American Council men, usually by McIntire through the Christian Beacon, were answered, but most of the leadership of the NAE continued to hope that the breach with the ACC could be healed and that merger of the two organizations might eventually be possible. Strong fundamentalist spokesmen, such as Bob Jones and John R. Rice, were heard in the discussions of the NAE, and they as well as many others hoped to bring the two groups together. In March, 1944, Rice, editor of the Sword of the Lord, urged his readers to pray for the merger of the NAE and ACC.⁶ The desire of the NAE men to include those who had not withdrawn from denominations connected with the Federal Council, and the unwillingness of McIntire to "fellowship" organizationally with these men, continued to be an obstacle, however, and the two groups grew further and further apart. The inclusion of various pentecostal groups within the NAE added to the difficulty, and well before the end of the decade reconciliation seemed far away.

Despite the clearly expressed desire of the NAE men to avoid the kind of controversial activity that marked the American Council, an important function of the organization was the attack on liberal and non-evangelical domination of the Protestant establishment. This difficult position found expression in a letter, published in the report on the 1943 convention, written by James DeForest Murch, long-time editor of the NAE organ, United Evangelical Action:

I believe the Chicago meeting to be one of the most significant gatherings in the current history of American Protestantism. Its

spirit was intelligent, positive, constructive and forward looking. . . . [The organization seems] a medium through which evangelicals may achieve satisfactory co-operative action and protect themselves from liberal and totalitarian ecclesiastical control.⁷

A resolution of the 1948 annual convention expressed the purpose of the organization: ". . . to provide a fellowship for those who oppose apostasy, and who desire a means of unitedly presenting the claims of Evangelical Christianity."⁸ The third of five objectives was published in the report on the 1949 annual convention:

To establish a common front for the promotion of evangelical truth against the inroads of heresy (commonly called modernism or liberalism). To challenge all Christian groups and institutions to a positive declaration of the church's evangelical heritage and to lift the standard against all forms of infidelity, heresy, and apostasy.⁹

J. E. Wright gave the following strong statement at the annual convention in 1946:

I am more than ever impressed with the need of maintaining a most positive stand against infidelity and apostasy in Christendom. . . . The National Association of Evangelicals has little reason for existence if it fails to make clear its repudiation of the false doctrines of modernism which are endorsed and propagated by prominent leaders of several of the interdenominational organizations of this country, notably those of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America.

Men who deny the deity of Christ, the virgin birth, the miracles of our Saviour, the efficacy of His shed blood to save us from our sins, His physical resurrection, and His personal return in power and glory are not Christians but are lost and doomed sinners in need of repentance even though they may occupy places of honor in the Church. The effort of all evangelicals must ever be to purge their churches of these pagans.¹⁰

It would be difficult to find a more total condemnation of unorthodox theology in the pages of the Christian Beacon itself. Many such statements by the early leaders of the NAE demonstrate that they saw opposition to Protestant unorthodoxy as a major activity of the organization though they hoped to escape the stigma which attached to the controversial

activities of McIntire and the earlier fundamentalists. In 1972, at the thirtieth anniversary of the National Association of Evangelicals, Dr. Clyde Taylor, general director of the organization, looked back and noted the situation which called the movement into existence: "Protestant leadership was largely polarized. Theological liberals had gained control of most of the old-line denominations and were quite willing to use political pressures to curtail or eliminate an evangelical voice in their churches. Evangelicals needed a united voice to safeguard their freedoms."¹¹

In the same article Taylor cited the three issues which separated the NAE from the American Council:

1. The question of immediate and complete separation from denominations and corporations in which apostasy existed.
2. The question of creating an official council of churches as against a fellowship of evangelicals for united action.
3. The issue of a polemical and negative approach as against a constructive approach.¹²

The first and third of these issues were the most difficult, though they were tied closely to the second. The NAE allowed membership to churches, church councils, denominations, various evangelical agencies, and individuals, while the ACC was a genuine council of churches admitting only denominations to membership. Neither the NAE nor the ACC would admit denominations which were connected with the Federal Council, though the NAE would admit individual churches of denominations which held membership in the FCC. Perhaps the third was the most important division between the two groups. Clyde Taylor has pointed out that most of those involved in the formation of the NAE had not been personally involved in the "fundamentalist controversy of the 1920's."¹³

The Presbyterian group led by McIntire and the General Association of Regular Baptist Churches, represented by Robert T. Ketcham, the two largest groups in the American Council, were both formed in withdrawals from main-line denominations which were considered to have apostasized. Men such as Ketcham, who had fought long, hard battles to withdraw from the Northern Baptist Convention, were not inclined to associate themselves with organizations which involved the slightest link with the ecclesiastical enemy. Men such as McIntire, who had had the church buildings of his congregation taken by the denominational machinery, were inclined to a sterner view than men who had been spectators to the controversy, even though they might not be separated by theological differences. For their part, not having been involved in intense ecclesiastical battle, certain of the NAE leaders were "to some extent scared" of the "vehemence of the American Council men" and "their pre-occupation with the Federal Council."¹⁴

Comment on the leadership of the two organizations was offered by fundamentalist editor John R. Rice in 1944. Rice was closer to McIntire in philosophy than to the men who led the NAE but was working more closely with the NAE and promoted it in the pages of the Sword of the Lord. He long maintained cordial relations with both organizations and often expressed the hope that the NAE would "move toward a firmer position against apostasy. Rice never worked closely with McIntire or the leadership of the American Council. He and Bob Jones led the fundamentalist faction within the NAE, though Jones was more involved in the organization than Rice. As mentioned, Rice urged his readers to pray for merger of the NAE and ACC. In an article in March, 1944, he

noted that the American Council was led by "the more aggressive fundamentalists, men who have boldly broken with the modernistic leadership in their denominations." The NAE was led principally by men "who have stayed inside the denominations," men naturally less aggressive. Rice further stated:

They are afraid of the boldness of the American Council. They are afraid of the leadership of Dr. Carl McIntire. They are a little embarrassed, we believe, by the independents in their own ranks. [The ACC men] . . . have sometimes accused the National Association of Evangelicals of being compromisers, not willing to openly attack the Federal Council and its modernism. And I am very sorry to say that the National Association of Evangelicals, through their official spokesmen, have sometimes gone so far as to accuse the American Council leaders of self-seeking and falsehoods.

Actually, though American Council leaders may be sometimes over critical, each of them has paid a real price for leadership, . . . their aggressive leadership is needed in the National Association of Evangelicals. They have more experience in fighting modernism and in standing for the fundamentals of the faith.¹⁵

Under attack by the McIntire group for failing to maintain a clearcut stand against infidelity, the leaders of the NAE through the years were drawn often to set forth carefully the position of their organization. The phrase "Cooperation Without Compromise" was the theme of the 1949 annual convention which met in Chicago, and was the title of the authorized history of the organization written by J. D. Murch and published in 1956.¹⁶ During the 1949 convention Stephen W. Paine, then president of NAE, delivered an address in which he set out the limits of cooperation. He first noted that in "all of the major branches of Protestantism" men were deserting the faith and relegating it to the "category of myths, and have gone about it to set up another gospel which is not the gospel. . . ." Referring to the brethren of the American Council, he stated, ". . . their group and ours are one in the

Faith, even though we are not agreed as to organizational policies." He insisted that NAE cooperation did not ". . . involve any compromise whatsoever in the tenets which comprise the basic core of evangelical faith common to all Bible-believing groups." "N. A. E. is not an inclusivist organization. It has no place whatsoever for those not wholly evangelical in faith." He then scored the Federal Council of Churches for its inclusion of leaders who denied various elements of the evangelical faith. After pointing out that the NAE did not seek to impose upon its member churches in the area of denominational distinctives, Paine stated:

. . . we have found that our area of agreement embraces those truths which we all hold to be essential to salvation. We have come to realize that despite areas of disagreement, we are dealing with people who give evidence of being New Testament Christians and who have a theological platform consistent therewith. We therefore base our co-operation fully and solely upon the common faith of us all, allowing each other complete freedom in our distinctives.

He criticized the ACC for invading the area of denominational distinctives and indeed criticized the FCC on the same basis. The issue of affiliations was then brought up, and Paine declared that the NAE would not place under scrutiny the connections of its members. He recognized those scriptures which forbid "fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness" and "yoking together with unbelievers" and stated: "Therefore, we will not have in our fellowship any unbelievers if we know it." He then came to what was near the central question and asserted that he had heard of no verse which says, "Have no fellowship with those who have in your opinion fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness." He then concluded that the NAE holds neither denominational distinctives, nor the matter of affiliations, to be unimportant, but does not make

any attempt to regulate its members in these areas.¹⁷

Throughout the decade this theme was sounded again and again by NAE spokesmen. Clearly they endorsed the principle that non-evangelical figures are to be excluded from fellowship, but just as clearly they refused to make an issue of the affiliations of their member churches. The address by Dr. Stephen Paine which was summarized in the preceding paragraph was presented in 1949. It rehearsed many points which had been made in a sermon given at the previous year's convention by the same man, but by 1949 the tone had changed somewhat. The 1948 version was conciliatory toward the American Council; by 1949 positions had considerably hardened.¹⁸ In 1951 Dr. Paine authored a pamphlet distributed by the NAE, "Separation--Is Separating Evangelicals", which revealed the extent to which the issues had developed.¹⁹

In February, 1948, Dr. Robert Ketcham, at the time president of the American Council, identified the question between the ACC and the NAE: "The issue is not denunciation and repudiation of apostasy. The real issue is whether or not separation from apostasy should be added to repudiation and denunciation. This and this alone is the present issue between the American Council of Christian Churches and the National Association of Evangelicals."²⁰ Paine used this statement by Ketcham as the introduction of his discussion of the differences between the organizations. He readily agreed that "the Scriptures enjoin the non-cooperation of believers with apostasy, . . ." but of course differed with the ACC men on the application of this principle. He stated that the ACC position "puts into one package all denominations in the Federal Council, whether apostate or non-apostate, and declares that the

evangelical Bible-believing Christian who stays in membership connection with any of them is disobeying the commands of Scripture." He then pointed out that some of the leaders of the ACC, referring particularly to McIntire, did not leave their denomination but were ejected and expended considerable unsuccessful effort in an attempt to be reinstated. It is important to note that Paine in no way suggested that he opposed withdrawal from an "apostate" denomination, but in fact claimed credit for the NAE in bringing many churches out of their denominations. What he did insist upon was that the timing of any such withdrawal be left to the conscience of the individual Christian or church. The position of Paine and of the NAE was summarized in the following statement:

Realizing the different stages and degrees of modernism in the various FCC denominations, as well as the varying types of organizational representation and control, and the varying degrees and stages of conviction among evangelical men and congregations, the NAE decided that, recognizing the historic Protestant principle that believers should separate from apostasy, it must also recognize the Protestant principle of individual freedom of conscience in assessing and determining the Lord's promptings.²¹

Long before 1951, NAE leaders had seen signs that their softer approach was bringing the desired results. In 1947 J. Elwin Wright declared: "N. A. E. is winning the respect of evangelicals across the nation. . . ." He also noted that "some who have scorned fundamentalism through the years are admitting that a new spirit has come into the conservative movement in America. . . . There is abundance of proof that the policy of building a constructive program rather than majoring in diatribes against modernists is much more effective than the policy of continuous attack which is favored by a few critics of N. A. E."²²

Others would suggest that a considerable amount of diatribe was included in the program of the NAE. In 1950 John R. Rice informed his

readers that though the founders of the organization did not intend that "it should be in active opposition to the Federal Council of Churches," in practice "it has become necessary for the N. A. E. to openly show the dangers of the Federal Council's program, and I am glad they do."²³ Certainly as the NAE leaders were drawn into theological battle, they found it necessary to take more forthright positions than they intended, but even at the 1943 convention one speaker referred to the Federal Council of Churches as the "children of this world" while another saw Protestantism divided into two parts: "(1) Those who have departed from the true Christian tradition; (2) Those who adhere to the Christian tradition without equivocation or reservation."²⁴ And no less a spokesman than Dr. Stephen Paine suggested in 1948 that the mission of the NAE would involve the negative as well as the positive; that it would be necessary to tell "what the faith is not" as well as what it is. He further indicated that this might involve "implicating some person or agency, as the Federal Council of Churches."²⁵ One who is familiar with the rhetoric of evangelical and fundamentalist groups will nonetheless feel the milder tone of the NAE "exposure of unbelief."

Thus, the NAE was heavily involved in criticism of liberalism within the major Protestant institutions. Throughout the years of its existence, denunciation of non-orthodoxy was prominent in the speeches given at the annual conventions, the literature distributed by the organization, and the NAE journal, United Evangelical Action. This criticism was usually carried on in a more scholarly fashion and in more subdued tones than the attacks on liberalism made by the independent fundamentalists and the men of the ACC, but throughout the decade

fundamentalist influence was still strong within the National Association of Evangelicals. Attack on error did not have the prominence in NAE circles that it did in fundamentalist circles, however, and certainly was a lesser concern in NAE than in ACC.

The dispute between the NAE and ACC placed many evangelicals in a difficult position. Most wanted no part of the squabble and failed to align themselves with either group. Others became extreme partisans and actively worked against the "opposing" organization. Some, such as John R. Rice, attempted to remain on friendly terms with both groups. The complexities of the situation are seen in reactions occasioned by the publication, in the Sword during the Spring of 1949, of several articles by Carl McIntire which were strongly critical of the Federal Council of Churches. In answer to a letter from a reader who disliked the McIntire criticism of the FCC, Rice wrote:

. . . I am not connected with the American Council of Churches, but with the National Association of Evangelicals. And Dr. Carl McIntire, I understand, has sometimes criticized me because I do not break fellowship with all the good men in denominations which fellowship with the Federal Council of Churches. I am regularly engaged in large union revival campaigns and I work with all the people of God who believe the Bible and preach salvation by the blood of Christ. I may say very frankly that I have sometimes been irritated by the extreme to which Mr. McIntire sometimes goes, particularly in labelling some of us as "compromisers" who strive for unity and who have good fellowship with good, solid, Bible-believing Christians who remain in denominations where there is modernism. I feel I must maintain my fellowship with all those who truly love the Lord Jesus and believe His Word, even though they may do wrong, and I think they do, in being yoked up with unbelievers contrary to the command of II Corinthians 6:14-18.

. . . Whatever else can be said for Mr. McIntire, it surely is true that he loves the Word of God and defends it. It is unfortunately true that Harry Emerson Fosdick, that Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam, Bishop McConnell and many others who lead in the Federal Council of Churches are really infidels. . . . They scoff at the integrity of the Bible, at the deity of Christ, at

salvation through the atoning blood. In my judgment, no sincere Christian can be indifferent, in the face of such blatant and wicked treason to historic Christianity. I am against that kind of infidelity in the church. It is not Christianity. . . .

. . . What Mr. McIntire is saying on this matter needs to be said, and I am for him saying it and frankly and honestly back him up in a necessary protest.

. . . . So, while I do not go as far as Mr. McIntire in breaking fellowship with godly Christian people who have not left the major denominations, yet I believe the same gospel he believes and oppose the infidelity of principal leaders of the Federal Council of Churches for the same reason that Mr. McIntire does. Therefore, I asked permission to run his series of articles in The Sword of the Lord.²⁶

This would represent the thinking of the more conservative elements in the National Association of Evangelicals during the first decade of its existence. Toward the end of the decade, some of these fundamentalist leaders began to drift away from the organization, partially in dissatisfaction with its position with regard to separation, partially because of a dispute over evangelism. Rice and Bob Jones represented a group of evangelists within the organization who urged that the NAE become actively involved in the promotion of evangelistic campaigns throughout the country. At first there was some enthusiasm for such a program within the organization, but as it became clear that certain of the member groups were opposed to mass evangelism, the plans were dropped. During the early 1950s several of the fundamentalist leaders, including Rice and Jones, ceased to be actively involved in the organization.²⁷ This more fully confirmed leadership in the hands of men who had not been involved in the fundamentalist-modernist controversy and moved the organization in a "softer" direction. The polemic of the NAE against unorthodoxy became less polemical and the divergence between the fundamentalists and the "evangelicals" grew more marked.

Had the NAE men, the Baptist fundamentalists led by Rice, the independent fundamentalists represented by Jones, and the men of the American Council been joined together in a strong organization with a clear platform, the history of evangelicalism in the next years might have been far different. As it was, the energy and interest that came to the evangelical community in the years after the war, highlighted by the emergence of Billy Graham as a national figure, found the evangelicals disunited and unable to speak with any compelling voice to the shape which the "revival" of the 1950s would take. Since their defeat in the struggles of the twenties, the evangelicals had operated in relative isolation, little affected by the shifts in the theological temperature of the surrounding community, exerting little influence on the national scene. Neo-orthodoxy had challenged and finally unseated liberalism as the dominant force in American Protestantism, but this struggle had been of only peripheral interest to most evangelicals. Even those evangelicals who remained within the major denominations tended to be much more involved with evangelical, interdenominational activities than with the programs of their denominations. With the surge of evangelical activity following the war and the emergence of Graham in 1949, the evangelical community again would find it necessary to consider its relationship to the whole of American Protestantism, and indeed to the whole of American society.

NOTES
CHAPTER 2

¹National Association of Evangelicals, A Report of the Constitutional Convention (Chicago, 1943), p. 9.

²Stephen Paine, "Separation" Is Separating Evangelicals (printed privately by J. Elwin Wright, 1951), pp. 38-39.

³NAE, Report of Constitutional Convention, p. 8.

⁴Ibid., pp. 23-24.

⁵Ibid., p. 39.

⁶Sword, March 24, 1944, X, 3.

⁷NAE, Report of Constitutional Convention, p. 55.

⁸NAE, A Report of the Sixth Annual Convention (Chicago, 1948), p. 39.

⁹NAE, A Report of the Seventh Annual Convention (Chicago, 1949), p. 1.

¹⁰NAE, A Report of the Fourth Annual Convention (Chicago, 1946), p. 51.

¹¹United Evangelical Action, Spring, 1972, pp. 8-9.

¹²Ibid., pp. 8-9.

¹³Ibid., p. 9.

¹⁴Paine, "Separation," p. 39.

¹⁵Sword, March 24, 1944, X, 1-3.

¹⁶James DeForest Murch, Cooperation Without Compromise (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1956).

¹⁷NAE, Report of Seventh Convention, pp. 23-29.

¹⁸NAE, Report of Sixth Convention, pp. 40-47.

¹⁹Paine, "Separation."

- ²⁰Robert Ketchum, quoted by Stephen Paine, "Separation," p. 3.
- ²¹Paine, "Separation," pp. 3-5.
- ²²NAE, A Report of the Fifth Annual Convention (Chicago, 1947),
p. 9.
- ²³Sword, October 13, 1950, XII, 7.
- ²⁴NAE, Report of Constitutional Convention, p. 16.
- ²⁵NAE, Report of Sixth Convention, p. 46.
- ²⁶Sword, April 8, 1949, XI, 1-6.
- ²⁷Interview with Clyde Taylor, Washington, D.C., August, 1973.

CHAPTER 3

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SEPARATION

John R. Rice began the publication of the Sword of the Lord on September 28, 1934, as simply the voice of the evangelist in print "preaching the gospel, rebuking sin, defending the faith, teaching the Bible, and winning sinners to the Lord Jesus Christ." The paper would maintain a constant war "on booze, on horse race gambling, on modernism and unbelief in the churches, and on sin of every kind, in the church as well as out." Readers were told that if they wished a friend to know what it meant to be a fundamentalist, they could give him a subscription to the Sword.¹ And indeed, through the years there has been no better place to gauge the position of fundamentalists than in the pages of the Sword. Fundamentalists have been far too individualistic to allow any one spokesman's position on a subject to stand for that of fundamentalism. There have always been disputes within fundamentalism, as there have been within most other groups, but the Sword, because of its continuous publication since 1934 and because Rice has always been near the center of fundamentalist thought, is the best single source on fundamentalist attitudes during the years with which this study is concerned. The unwillingness to compromise on matters thought, rightly or wrongly, to be matters of principle was a central element in the fundamentalist mentality and is reflected always in the Sword.

Fundamentalists always believed that there had been more "Bible-believers" than "liberals" in the churches during the years of the great denominational wars, and attributed the defeat of the conservatives to the refusal of the orthodox leadership of the denominations to eliminate non-orthodox teaching before it could gain control of the denominational machinery. In the minds of the fundamentalists, the conquest of the denominations by liberalism was an act of treachery. Liberals came into power in the denominations secretly, usually denying that their views varied from accepted positions. Only after the machinery was firmly in their own hands was the real nature of their position revealed, and only then did the average church member begin to be affected by the liberal teaching. The failure of orthodoxy to retain control of the denominations was therefore seen as the result of the refusal of the conservatives to examine carefully the teaching of those suspected of non-orthodox views and exclude any who veered from orthodoxy. Those who had withdrawn from their denominations during the struggles of the twenties and thirties were ever on their guard lest the liberalism from which they had withdrawn gain entry to their new organizations in the way that it was considered to have entered the old. While many were critical of this fundamentalist effort to expose and resist encroachments of non-orthodox teaching, the fundamentalists pointed to the disastrous results which the policy of charity in matters of doctrinal difference had brought the old denominations. In fundamentalist eyes, the old-line denominations were virtually all apostate or near apostate, and none retained even a fraction of the vigorous testimony which it had during the nineteenth century. Only the

Southern Baptist Convention, among the major denominations, remained largely uncorrupted, and there was great concern in fundamentalist circles over the teaching of evolution in Baptist colleges and softness toward the "higher critical view of the Bible" in Southern Baptist seminaries. Rice in particular was concerned about the Southern Baptist Convention, as his work had been within that group, though by 1934 he had been for some time in independent work. His brief association with J. Frank Norris, a Texas fundamentalist Baptist and bitter foe of the Southern Baptist Convention, encouraged more vocal attack on suspect elements within the convention. Though after he broke with Norris his relations with the convention temporarily improved, by the 1940s concern over conditions within the Convention was again a major element in the Sword.

The second issue of the Sword contained a message by Rice which set forth his position on the matter of separation from unbelief. That message would be reprinted through the years with changes in illustrations, specific names and places, but with no change of position. The sermon was titled "The Unequal Yoke: What the Bible says about Christians yoking up with unbelievers in lodges, in marriage, and in churches and denominations."² The text was II Corinthians 6:14-18:

Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers; for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing:

and I will receive you; And will be a father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. [KJV]

Rice applied these verses without hesitation, declaring that Christians ought not be joined with unbelievers "in marriage, in lodges, and in churches." Though Christians should certainly associate socially with unsaved people and witness to them in the normal concourse of daily living, any "yoke" which implied mutual responsibilities and identification must be avoided. Not only was this based on the passage in II Corinthians, but it was said to be "one of the plainest doctrines in the Bible." He cited the emphasis on separation given to the Jews in the Old Testament. Jews were to be set apart by circumcision, by special dietary restrictions, and by marital restrictions. They were told not to plant a vineyard with two kinds of seeds, not to wear a garment made of two kinds of material, and not to plow with an ox and an ass yoked together. These were cited as evidence that the doctrine of separation was a major theme of the Old Testament. While the ceremonial provisions of Jewish law did not apply to Christians, the principle of separation assuredly did.³ The New Testament was said to be as much concerned about the matter of separation, with special emphasis given to matters of religious observance. Christians should have "no 'yoke,' no 'fellowship,' no 'agreement,' no 'part,' no 'concord,'" with unbelievers in churches and religious programs. A newspaper survey was cited to demonstrate serious variance between orthodox belief and the opinions of a significant number of ministers, and it was pointed out that the New Testament predicted the emergence of "false teachers and false prophets." The New Testament said that the introduction of false teaching was to be done "privily" and with "feigned words," and

Rice commented further:

What an accurate picture that is of modernists! They pretend to believe in the Bible, the miracles, salvation, Heaven, etc. But when they say the Bible is inspired, they mean just like other good books are inspired. They say that Jesus is the Son of God, but they say that so are we all the sons of God! They may say they believe in miracles, but in the next breath they say that the radio and printing press are miracles. Actually their words are "feigned words," for secretly, that is, privily, they are bringing in damnable doctrines that deny the Lord who bought them, deny the Bible, God's Word. . . .

The sad truth is told, in verse 2 above, that "many shall follow their pernicious ways"! In these wicked, modern days, many people follow unbelievers and modernists. Verse 3 tells us that such unbelievers and modernists still claim to be preachers, still claim to be Christians, though they do not believe the very fundamentals of the Christian faith, . . . But they hold on to the form of Christianity while they preach their wicked unbelief. . . .⁴

Rice was definite as to what Christians should do when they found themselves in churches, denominations, or religious organizations with such ministers: they should get out. "They should not be yoked with unbelievers in the churches and religious work. To be in a church with unbelievers, skeptics, and doubters is to disobey the plain command of Christ." Rice then stressed the injunction of Jude to "earnestly contend for the faith," waving aside the objections of any who might dislike "contentions" and insisting that the Scriptures enjoin Christians from having any peace with "modernists, rationalists, unbelievers," or "false teachers." He then explained:

Honest Christians may differ as to some details of Bible interpretation, but honest Christians cannot differ about the deity of Christ nor whether the Bible is all God's Word, infallibly true, nor about the blood atonement nor about the miracles such as the virgin birth and the bodily resurrection of Christ, the creation of the world by the direct act of God, etc., nor about a literal Hell. When a man dissents from what the Bible says on such great fundamentals of the faith, then that man has no right to call himself a Christian, much less a preacher of the Gospel or a teacher of the Bible. Such a man is an impostor, a deceiver, a false prophet. . . . an infidel in the garb of a preacher, with

language of deceit because of covetousness, is a wolf in sheep's clothing, a base hypocrite. He forfeits the respect of decent people and should have open scorn and public exposure at the hands of true Christians everywhere. The Bible commands us to contend earnestly for the faith.⁵

Though fundamentalists might differ with one another on a great variety of subjects, might even differ violently, among those who enthusiastically accepted the fundamentalist label there was agreement on the importance of this emphasis. Modernism, liberalism, whatever name might be given to any non-orthodox position, it must be exposed as non-Christian and resisted with all possible vigor. Christians must separate themselves from it and refuse it any recognition. Once it became clear that control of a church, denomination, or other religious organization could not be retained by orthodoxy or retrieved, Christians bore a responsibility to withdraw to a doctrinally pure testimony. If the non-orthodox could not be ejected, then the orthodox must withdraw. Such thinking caused the withdrawal of the Orthodox and Bible presbyterians from their denomination, the withdrawal of the Regular Baptists and the Conservative Baptists from the Northern Baptist Convention and countless smaller groups from other denominations. Great variation existed among these groups on the degree of separation required, and controversy on this point was often bitter among fundamentalists, but all agreed that the maintenance of a doctrinally pure testimony was demanded by God, and all were determined not to allow the circumstances which forced their withdrawal to be repeated.

An article in the March 22, 1935, Sword revealed no mellowing of Rice's position. In defending the fundamentalist crusade against modernism, he began with Cain and Abel and traced the development of

true religion as against false religion through history, finally stating, "The modern terms for these extremes of religion are fundamentalism and modernism." He then contrasted the two:

A Fundamentalist is a believer.
 A Modernist is an unbeliever.
 A Fundamentalist is old fashioned.
 A Modernist is new fangled.
 A Fundamentalist insists on a supernatural, infallible Bible, a supernatural Savior, a supernatural salvation.
 Modernists insist on a human, fallible Bible, on Jesus as a good prophet, teacher, example and martyr instead of a Savior and a salvation of human righteousness.
 Bible Christians are Fundamentalists.
 All infidels are Modernists.⁶

Donald Tinder, in an analysis of fundamentalist Baptists in the North and West, suggests four degrees of separation which were practiced by fundamentalists with regard to modernism:

- 1 Those who considered separation in their personal and local relations to be sufficient.
- 2 Those who withdraw from a denomination where modernism was present, but who continued to fellowship with those fundamentalists who remained within.
- 3 Those who refused to fellowship even with those fundamentalists who remained within the tainted denomination.
- 4 Those who would fellowship only with fundamentalists who were of their particular denominational position. That is, only with Baptists who were not part of a denomination containing modernism.⁷

Tinder used the term fundamentalist in a somewhat broader sense than it has been used in this study. Generally, the fundamentalists so designated in this study are those in Tinder's "categories 2, 3, and 4.

Robert Shuler, pastor of Trinity Methodist Church in Los Angeles, remained within that denomination throughout his life and was a most vigorous opponent of non-orthodoxy, but suggested before his death that he would not remain within it if he were a young preacher.

W. B. Riley fought liberalism within the Northern Baptist Convention

during his life and withdrew from the denomination while on his death-bed. Most important fundamentalist leaders, however, left their denominations, either voluntarily or involuntarily, during their active years. Even among those who remained within a denomination, there was usually little active denominational involvement. Often their personal interpretation of their relationship to the denomination amounted to separation, though technically they were members. The ecclesiology of the various groups of fundamentalists which remained in denominations containing non-orthodoxy often justified their tie with the denomination by denying that it existed. They usually held that the only Biblical institution was the local church, and therefore any tie with a denomination was only technical.⁸ Separation was a vital element, perhaps the vital element, in the fundamentalist mentality. Fundamentalists might quarrel with one another as to when a denomination had actually become "apostate," but there was little disagreement that when that point was reached, it was the obligation of the Christian to withdraw.

A typical sermon on the subject of separation was printed in the November, 1941, Sword. Titled "God's Call to Separation," the sermon was by Robert E. Neighbour, a fundamentalist Baptist.⁹ Emphasizing that this was not a minor point, Neighbour opened by declaring:

The call of the whole Bible is the call to separation. Today I ran through some of the various scriptures that give the call to separation. Beloved, I was engulfed in a sea of truth. Accordingly, I just picked out a few scriptures which I thought most vital.

First came several verses from the Genesis creation account with the headings: "Light Separated from Darkness," "The Waters Above

Separated from the Waters Below," "The Waters Separated from the Dry Land," and "Day Separated from Night." The following comment, on the fourteenth verse, was typical: "If we are the children of light, and the children of the day, the night cannot dwell with us. We have no place of fellowship with the night." It was next pointed out that Abraham was called out from his homeland, and from him came a separated nation. Neighbour next pointed to the fetching of Rebekah as a bride for Isaac and then turned with greater attention to the bringing of Israel out of Egypt by Moses. Here he stressed the efforts of Pharaoh to persuade the Israelites to leave their herds behind, and then to go not far away. All of these were of course treated with the separation theme in mind. Turning to the New Testament, he first read II Corinthians 6:14-18, the passage most often referred to by fundamentalists as a text for messages on separation, and then commented: "The heart of the Bible is God's call, 'Come out.' What are we to come out of? Out of everything--out of ourselves, out of the world, out of darkness, and into Him, our all in all." Having presented the separatist theme in broad principle, Neighbour turned to suggest specific things from which Christians were to be separated. First he stated that evil brethren should be avoided, citing I Corinthians 5:11, "I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolator, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat." Then, false teachers become the object of separation, and Neighbour quoted several passages, finally reading a most important separatist passage from II John:

For many deceivers are entered into the world who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist. Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward. Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed. For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.

His closing illustrations concerned two women who questioned him at the end of a meeting. The pastors of the women had each denied some point of orthodox doctrine, and his advice to each was unequivocal: "Stay in that church only long enough to get out."¹⁰ This sermon, and an innumerable company of others which could be presented, reveals that separation had become far more than one scriptural injunction which placed upon believers certain obligations. Separatism had become virtually a system of doctrinal interpretation. It provided structure to the entire biblical message and was determinative of that message at numerous critical points. It was more than an injunction designed to protect the church and the individual believer from the ravages of the false teacher, though it was certainly that. In the fundamentalist system it became part of the plan of God for the ages and one of the dominant themes of Scripture.

Donald Tinder points out that one of the important activities of the General Association of Regular Baptist Churches, a group led for many years by Robert Ketcham which withdrew from the Northern Baptist Convention (American Baptist Convention), was the dissemination of warnings concerning false teachers. He writes:

Biblical instructions about false teachers were plentiful. H. C. Van Gilder, first full-time representative for the GARBC,

summarized many of them: Mt. 13:38 predicts the contemporaneous existence of true believers and false pretenders in the world and probably therefore in the local church, since otherwise the pretension would not be very convincing; I John 4:1-3 and Galatians 1:5-9 predict invasion by false apostles and deceitful workers who are to be judged, contended against (Jude 3,4), excluded (II John 10,11) withdrawn from (Eph. 5:11, I Timothy 6:3-5, II Timothy 2:20-21). Van Gilder believed the clearest exhortation to be in II Corinthians 6:14-7:1, which says in part, "Be ye not unequally yoked with unbelievers. . . ."¹¹

The attitude of fundamentalists toward those who held other theological positions was in their own thinking closely tied to their doctrinal views. Fundamentalists of course claimed to get their contempt for other theological positions, as well as their orthodox theology, from the Bible. They were therefore usually insensitive to any criticism of their abrasive approach. In reply to a letter from a modernist, who had objected to Rice's classification of him as an infidel, Rice answered that he could not address the man as a Christian brother because his publicly expressed beliefs showed him to be an unbeliever. Rice wrote, "I wrote you in the language of the Lord Jesus Himself, quoting His words in Matthew 23 to others, like yourself, very religious in observance, but denying Christ's deity, rejecting Him as Saviour, as you do." And later, commenting on his reply, he said:

Any modernist who brings any gospel besides the gospel of individual salvation by personal faith in the blood of Christ should be accursed, and Paul repeated it, "Let him be accursed!" Paul was not 'civil' to these religious hypocrites pretending to be Christians. . . . Instead of dealing with infidels and modernists (who deny the Bible and deny the deity of Christ and forsake the historic position of Bible Christianity) on the mere shallow plane of human civility, why not deal with them on the Bible basis commanded by our God and our Saviour?¹²

This did not mean that fundamentalists were being exhorted to have no sensitivity to the human feelings involved. Rice had broken with J. Frank Norris, as had virtually all of fundamentalism, largely

because of his intemperate attacks on other Christian leaders. Writing at the time of his split with Norris, Rice suggested that even though modernism must be exposed--he considered this to be axiomatic--fundamentalists needed to "magnify the great fundamental of Brotherly love. . . . Even the exposure of modernism ought to be so fairly done and in such brotherly love toward the misled Christians involved, that the fewest possible scars will be left. . . . Brotherly love is one of the greatest of the fundamentals."¹³ Some might doubt that Rice in all cases followed the advice he gave here.

Evidence of the consistency of the fundamentalist concern with separation is the fact that the Sword, throughout the years, periodically has printed a brief message by James M. Gray, one-time president of Moody Bible Institute, delivered at the height of the fundamentalist-modernist controversy and dealing with the relationship of the two theological positions. Gray quoted a famous January 3, 1924, editorial which set modernism solidly over against fundamentalism:

Christianity according to Fundamentalism is one religion. Christianity according to Modernism is another religion. Which is the true religion is the question that is to be settled in all probability by our generation for further generations. . . . The God of the fundamentalist is one God; the God of the Modernist is another. The Christ of the fundamentalist is one Christ; the Christ of Modernism is another. The Bible of Fundamentalism is one Bible; the Bible of Modernism is another. . . . Which God is the Christian God, which Christ is the Christian Christ, which Bible is the Christian Bible. . . . The future will tell.

Gray concluded:

The Christian Century is right.
How can any compromise be effected between these two things? . . . How can these two worlds be bound together? Can believers be yoked with unbelievers? Can righteousness have fellowship with unrighteousness? . . . Can he that believeth have part with the infidel?¹⁴

Both Gray's sermon and the 1924 Christian Century editorial continued, and continue, for fundamentalists to be valid expressions through which to relate oneself to the American theological spectrum.

Consistently through the years, opposition to non-orthodox teaching and the call for separation from "false teachers" and worldly living occupied a major position in the fundamentalist effort. In September of 1954 the Sword printed a message by Robert L. Sumner which had been a winner in the Sword's annual sermon contest. The sermon was titled "The Twentieth Century Issue Facing Twentieth Century Christians."¹⁵ Its topic was separation; its text was II Corinthians 6:14-7:1. The following week another sermon contest winner appeared. Entitled "False Prophets," this message by Robert Wells dealt even more rigorously with doctrinal deviation.¹⁶ Many have been critical of the fundamentalist attitude toward those of other theological positions. This was one of the chief criticisms made by the new evangelicals with whom this study is concerned. Fundamentalists were never willing to allow difference of opinion over what they called the "fundamental doctrines" to be considered mere differences of opinion by honest men searching for the truth. To the fundamentalist there need be no "search for truth," for the truth was already in hand. Those who chose to deny it were engaging in wilful unbelief and in deliberate attempts to undermine the belief of the faithful. Wells cited biblical evidence of "deliberate design on the part of these false teachers." He warned: "Coming from the ranks of the unbelievers, they enter the ranks of the believers. It is a specific act and for a specific purpose." They were said to be "Satan's ministers," and their activities were seen as "sinister,

malicious and insidious." On denominational particularisms, on questions of baptism, church polity, and in other areas, there might be disagreement among "Bible-believing Christians," but with regard to such clearly taught matters as creation, the fall of man, the validity of Old Testament prophecy, the virgin birth, the sinless life and substitutionary death of Christ, and his resurrection and deity, there could be only two alternatives, acceptance or rejection. And any preacher or professor rejecting any of the doctrines deemed essential by the fundamentalists was considered a false teacher. It is important to note that fundamentalists always made a distinction between a religious figure and the common sinner, who made no profession of Christianity and whose ideas about religion were expected to be false. The "sinner" was the object of compassionate missionary effort, the "false prophet" was the object of denunciation. The fundamentalists insisted that such a distinction had biblical warrant. The apostle Paul wrote in the New Testament many tender entreaties addressed to the sinner and the erring Christian, but Wells also noted warnings that certain men "pervert the gospel of Christ" and teach "another gospel which is not another." Fundamentalists were confident they could distinguish simple sinners from the pernicious false teachers who were the objects of their attack. Commented Wells: "Although Jesus ate with publicans and sinners, His Word tells us that we are not to have fellowship with false teachers." They also made room for "weaker brothers," who held erroneous doctrine though they were in fact Christians, but toward those deemed false teachers, fundamentalists were unsparing in condemnation. Warned Wells:

These wolves of Hell have so clearly disguised their naturally beastlike qualities and camouflaged their hairy, brutish, ferocious, ravenous character with the sheep's clothing of a pious profession and the terminology, forms and trappings of orthodoxy, that they have proven that it is possible to "deceive the very elect." They have gained influence, position and power through their cunning conniving and in this setting they inject the deadly, devastating poison of error, falsehood, heresy and downright unbelief into the bloodstream of the human race.¹⁷

He charged that the evidence of the activities of such teachers in

"each of the major denominations in America" would require scores and scores of volumes while "nearly every religious institution" would require additional volumes. The efforts of the Federal Council of Churches (recently become the National Council of Churches) would necessitate "literally hundreds of volumes more." Wells then produced the 1924 Christian Century editorial as evidence of the chasm between modern religious thought and fundamentalism's orthodoxy, and went on to attack the suggestion of one liberal theologian that the father of Jesus might well have been a German soldier stationed near Nazareth. The rejection of substitutionary atonement by Harry Emerson Fosdick, pastor of Riverside Church in New York and long a prime target of fundamentalist criticism, was presented as the essence of false teaching.

Wells quoted six verses which he said presented God's instructions for a Christian with regard to false prophets; the Christian was instructed to

"... avoid them"	Romans 16:17
"Be not unequally yoked" (with them)	II Corinthians 6:14
"... come out from among them"	II Corinthians 6:17
"... withdraw" (from them)	I Timothy 6:5
"... receive him not into your house"	II John 10,11
"... earnestly contend for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints."	Jude 3

Wells declared, "To associate with them in any way; to fellowship with them in any program; to give them the benefit of any support, moral or material; to belong to their churches; to lend them your influence; to give them the slightest indication of recognition, respect or honor; is to ignore, deny and disobey the plain teaching of the Bible and to compromise with the forces of Satan and Hell!" And in a final declaration Robert Wells charged:

If these men are ministers of Satan and ambassadors of Hell, and they are; if they are deceivers whose determination is to destroy the flock, and they are; if these men are preaching damnable heresies, denying the Lord that bought them and turning the grace of God into lasciviousness, and they are; if, in the sight of God, these men are wicked, ungodly, sensual men who have not the spirit of God, and they are; if these men are as the Bible declares, actually ignorant, presumptuous, arrogant fools who revile those things they cannot understand, and they are; if they are indeed leading multitudes of precious never-dying souls to their eternal damnation in Hell, and they are; they are the most vicious enemies of God and His Son and His church with which we have to contend. They are dangerous, deadly criminals in the realm of moral and spiritual truth and they need to be exposed. There must be no compromise in this. We must "take the gloves off" and in obedience to Divine exhortation, earnestly contend for the faith!¹⁸

Fundamentalists accepted the analysis of the 1924 editorial of Christian Century as one of the permanent markers of religious division in America. They were not totally ignorant of the changes brought to the theological world by the emergence of neo-orthodoxy, and from time to time, articles analyzing the dialectical theology appeared in fundamentalist literature. The neo-orthodox theologians were always categorized with the older liberals, however, and the basic distinction was held to lie between orthodoxy and non-orthodoxy, rather than between neo-orthodoxy and liberalism. One of the distinctions between the new evangelicals and the fundamentalists would be their attitudes toward the

emergence of neo-orthodoxy. Fundamentalists tended to see neo-orthodoxy only as a complicating factor, one making it more difficult and more needful to measure faithfulness to the Word. There was great variation among new evangelicals with regard to neo-orthodoxy, and a fuller discussion of their views will be made later, but they tended to take a more favorable view of the influence of the dialectical theologians, stressing their contribution in dethroning classical liberalism. The new evangelicals were certain that the changes in theological climate in America called for a re-evaluation of conservative strategy, while fundamentalists were even more confident that there had never been a greater need for bold condemnation of false teaching.

The battle against non-orthodoxy absorbed considerable fundamentalist attention, but the pages of the Sword reveal that other matters received equal attention. One of the consistent emphases of John R. Rice and most fundamentalists over the years was the promotion of evangelism. An evangelist himself, Rice devoted much effort to returning mass evangelism to the prominence it had experienced earlier in the century. It was Rice's hope that city-wide campaigns, backed by all orthodox churches, could again capture the imagination of America and act as the spearhead of the drive to restore orthodoxy and spiritual vitality. In the late 1940s the attempt to restore mass evangelism as an important part of the ministry of the church seemed to be succeeding, and the high point of this success was the emergence of Billy Graham, a fundamentalist evangelist, into national prominence in late 1949.

NOTES
CHAPTER 3

- ¹Sword, September 28, 1934, I, 1.
- ²Rice, The Unequal Yoke (Murfreesboro, Tenn.: Sword of the Lord, 1944).
- ³*Ibid.*, p. 4.
- ⁴*Ibid.*, p. 16.
- ⁵*Ibid.*, pp. 17-18.
- ⁶Rice, "The Reproach of Being a Fundamentalist," Sword, March 22, 1935, I, 1.
- ⁷Donald Tinder, "Fundamentalist Baptists in the Northern and Western United States" (Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 1972), p. 452.
- ⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 411-412.
- ⁹R. E. Neighbour, "God's Call to Separation," Sword, November 21, 1941, XI, 1-3.
- ¹⁰*Ibid.*
- ¹¹Tinder, "Fundamentalist Baptists," p. 394.
- ¹²Sword, February 9, 1945, XI, 1-2.
- ¹³Sword, April 8, 1937, III, 1.
- ¹⁴James M. Gray, "Controversy, Compromise or Consent--Which?"; Sword of the Lord, May 9, 1947, IX, 1-3; Christian Century, January 3, 1924, XL
- ¹⁵Robert L. Sumner, "The Twentieth Century Issue Facing Twentieth Century Christians," Sword, September 10, 1954, XX, 1, 9-10.
- ¹⁶Robert Wells, "False Prophets," Sword, September 17, 1954, XX, 1, 7-10.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 8.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 10

CHAPTER 4

THE ROLE OF MASS EVANGELISM

The defeat of the conservatives in the denominational wars, the effects of the First World War and the social and economic changes which followed, as well as the excesses of certain evangelists, had brought the end of mass evangelism as it had been practiced by Moody and Billy Sunday and a host of lesser evangelists. The major denominations were generally opposed to the involvement of the churches in programs of mass evangelism, and other than the Southern Baptist Convention, no major denomination considered evangelism the major task of the church. Tent revivalists, pentecostalists, and a variety of independent evangelists continued to hold "evangelistic meetings," and fundamentalists continued to hold "special revival meetings" sponsored by individual conservative churches but the days of massive union meetings sponsored by many churches throughout a city seemed to be over. The only nationally prominent revivalists tended to operate apart from any church connection, sometimes, as with Aimee Semple McPherson, starting churches or denominations of their own. Such revivalists as did achieve national notice usually did so more because of scandals connected with their work than because of any impact upon communities or churches. Many sects and cultic groups were aggressive in evangelistic activities and profited from the lessening of emphasis upon personal religion by the established churches.¹ Grover C. Loud expressed the opinion of the

major Protestant denominations when in 1928 he wrote that revivalism was a thing of the past.² Though earlier in the century, evangelists such as Sam Jones, B. Fay Mills, Reuben A. Torrey, J. Wilbur Chapman, and Billy Sunday himself had held great meetings supported by the churches, by 1930 it indeed seemed that the day of the large revival meeting was over. Those conservatives who still supported the concept of mass evangelism and the techniques of revivalism which had been developed by Moody and Sunday failed even to secure the support of fellow conservatives. In fundamentalist circles the single church revival took the place of the large union meeting, and city-wide meetings were no longer held in most parts of the country.

The methods of revivalism continued to be practiced in these single church meetings, however, and many conservatives looked hopefully for a day in which the large union meeting would return. John R. Rice promoted the concept in the pages of the Sword, and through "Sword Conferences" held throughout the country. Other evangelists continued to work through the churches, and during the Second World War their efforts began to bring some success. In the last years of the war there seemed growing signs that churches were looking more favorably toward mass evangelism. Youth For Christ and other independent evangelistic organizations were demonstrating that evangelism among young people could be effectively done on a city-wide basis, and evangelists were again gaining the attention of the broader community.

Early in 1945 Southern Baptist evangelist Hyman Appelman conducted revival meetings in Los Angeles which were supported by a variety of conservative groups, including the American Council of Christian Churches

and the National Association of Evangelicals. The meetings were very successful, with nightly attendance averaging 4,000, and were supported by over 200 churches. Robert Shuler, fundamentalist pastor of the large Trinity Methodist Church in Los Angeles, reported on the meetings in his paper, the Methodist Challenge.³ Having been an evangelist himself, Shuler was pleased to see in the meetings evidence that God had not ceased to bless through mass evangelism as the critics of revivalism charged. He wrote: "The Methodist Church may be through. She may never come back. But the revivals are still here, when the conditions are met. More than that, God is not through. Nor is He through with mass evangelism." He pointed to the massive youth meetings which had recently been held by conservative evangelical organizations in New York and in Chicago as further evidence of the continued effectiveness of the revivalist methods. His own church and two others were the only Methodist churches participating in the campaign, and the Methodist leadership of the city had been "openly critical" and "hostile" to the meetings. All the churches cooperating in the crusade were said to be "fundamental and evangelical" though of every denominational persuasion. The movement was sound, there were "no modernists or liberals in it!" There was no disagreement among the churches concerning the inspiration of Scripture. Shuler reported:

All believe the Bible to be the Word of God. They all believe in the Virgin Birth of Jesus, the blood atonement, the bodily resurrection of Jesus, salvation by the faith of man and the grace of God, and a victorious life in Jesus Christ. Among them are Calvinists and Arminians, those who baptize by various modes and in various manners. people who are very emotional and people who are the opposite.

Baptists furnished the greatest support, with considerable numbers of Nazarene, Pilgrim Holiness, Church of God, Pentecostal, Presbyterian,

and Congregational churches also participating. Though the secular newspapers had "practically ignored" the meetings, and the Methodist denominational press would probably fail to "so much as mention" them, Schuler saw in them "a mighty refutation of the claim of the Federal Council of Churches that the work of Christianity must be done some other way and that educational processes must take the place of a Holy Ghost revival." The most important thing in Schuler's eyes was that there were plans for these same agencies to work together in sponsoring such meetings throughout the country.⁴

John R. Rice also placed great significance upon the success of the Los Angeles meetings and similar meetings which were held in Philadelphia. In an article on "Union and Independent Revivals," he insisted on the necessity of large city-wide meetings to put the gospel before the greatest number of people. He strongly endorsed the kind of campaigns being held by Appelman and exhorted churches to participate energetically. He noted the favorable report of the Philadelphia crusade which had been printed in the Christian Beacon and some words of warning concerning the inclusion of churches with modernistic leanings in the sponsorship of any such meetings. Rice had long maintained that union meetings should be sponsored exclusively by "Bible-believing, fundamental churches" and agreed that McIntire's warning was important, but the burden of his comments was to urge readers not to allow resistance to compromise to be used as an excuse for rejecting the concept of union meetings. Rice believed that if the word of God were preached as it should be in the meetings, "these infidels falsely calling themselves Christians, will not want to enter with us into revival campaigns."

He further believed, "modernism will not grow in a red hot revival," and warned, "A false idea of separation that keeps us from revival is sin."⁵

In the spring of 1946 Rice, Bob Jones, and Paul Rood came to Chicago in a city-wide evangelistic crusade sponsored by over 200 churches and evangelical agencies. The campaign was the first such city-wide effort since Billy Sunday had been in the city twenty-eight years before. The three speakers were all strong fundamentalists. Rood, with W. B. Riley, had been one of the founders of the World's Christian Fundamental Association. The meetings enjoyed wide conservative support, with such organizations as Wheaton College, Moody Bible Institute, Chicago Evangelistic Institute, Northern Baptist Seminary, Lutheran Bible Institute, the Child Evangelism Fellowship, Salvation Army, and Youth For Christ entering enthusiastically into the campaign. The evidence was mounting that orthodoxy was yet an energetic element in the church and that the obituary which had been pronounced over fundamentalism ever since the twenties had been decidedly premature.

In October of 1948 the Sword printed an article which revealed much about the attitude of John R. Rice and other fundamentalists toward mass evangelism. Rice had long been involved in a controversy over a book which had been published by Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer earlier in the century, titled True Evangelism.⁶ Chafer was strongly orthodox, long president of Dallas Theological Seminary, and was a premillennial dispensationalist. The book was an attack on the revivalistic methods employed in mass evangelism and had been originally published in the days of the declining popularity of revivalism. Chafer had been

unfavorably impressed by the techniques of Billy Sunday, and the book denounced public invitations, mass meetings, and other aspects of revivalism. Moody Bible Institute had secured the rights to some of Chafer's works and announced plans to republish True Evangelism. Rice launched a campaign to prevent any republication of the book, even offering to buy Moody's existing inventory, but was unsuccessful. This dispute over mass evangelism was the major concern of the Sword during the late forties, when revivalism again seemed on the verge of acceptance by at least the conservative churches.

In this article Rice attempted to explain why he took unpopular positions on a variety of issues, even though it closed certain doors to him and sometimes cost him friendships. Seeking to answer this question, Rice revealed much concerning his view of the purpose of revivalism. He warned that "the cheap way of trying to have revivals without ever touching fundamental moral problems and without bringing conviction for sin and transformation in life are indeed shallow and powerless efforts at revival." The evangelist must also assume responsibility for "getting people right on the main fundamental doctrines" if he wished to see great revival. Preaching the great doctrines and strong preaching against worldliness were necessary to great revival. They were necessary because, in Rice's view, separation from worldliness and adherence to orthodox doctrine were important criteria as to whether revival existed or not. Modernism would not grow in a "red hot revival," as Rice had earlier said, because revival necessarily included preaching against modernism and other forms of false doctrine, because one of the fruits of revival was orthodoxy of belief. Rice went on to tell of a night several years past when he had vowed to God to expend every effort

to bring back city-wide revivals, whatever the cost. He disclaimed any presumption that he was responsible for the resurgence of evangelistic activity then underway, but rejoiced in the fact. He supposed that there were "a hundred times" as many union revival campaigns as there had been ten years before. He then described the purpose of all this activity:

. . . I am not trying simply to get a few open doors for revival services for myself. I am trying to change the thought of a whole generation: . . . I am trying to bring emphasis again to the power of the Holy Spirit. I am trying to convince preachers again that they need to preach against sin and worldliness and call God's people to seek God's face and turn from their wicked ways. I am trying to make America believe again that God answers prayer. I am trying to get American homes turned back to God, to get family altars established, to teach parents to discipline their children and make them obey. I am trying to bring back a fundamental viewpoint about the Bible and about God and about soul winning that is essential to the winning of thousands.

. . . We are trying to take the long look and to color a whole generation. It takes longer to start a loaded freight train of a hundred box cars than to start one empty. In trying to turn a whole generation back to revival we will lose some battles but, by God's grace, we will not lose the war.

So one must accept some defeats now for the good that will follow. I must preach to Christians to "come out from among them, and be ye separate," and against the lodges and the movies and the dance and tobacco, though it loses me some friends now. But it is turning hundreds of other preachers to preach on these subjects. It is growing a conscience among tens of thousands of Christians about holy living. In the long run, such preaching will bring more revivals, save more souls, than if I preached pleasantly, pleased everybody, and had all doors open.⁷ [Emphasis added]

Apart from the reference to lodges, these lines represent fairly the views of most fundamentalists on the purpose and nature of revivalism. Revivalism which was not designed to produce separated, doctrinally correct Christians was not worth the effort. Though in the short run it might seem easier to avoid offense on unpopular issues, the purpose dictated that exhortation against doctrinal error and worldliness

occupy an important position in revival preaching. To reverse the verdict of the previous generation on fundamentalist orthodoxy in doctrine and morals was a central concern of all revivalist activity. Rice was indeed trying to "change the thought of a whole generation." Fundamentalists insisted that the real test of a revival meeting was not the number of people who attended, or even the number who walked the aisle, though as anyone else they wanted large numbers, but the real test was the condition of the churches when the meetings were over. If the churches were not stronger in the faith, if Christians were not living more separated lives, then, however many might have come forward at a meeting, revival had not come. But the fundamentalists felt they were on the verge of a great revival. They saw in the renewed interest in revivalism and mass evangelism an opportunity to recall wavering churches to the faith and to strengthen and extend the ministry of those which had been true. Revivalism would be the spearhead of a renewed attack on the forces of religious liberalism. Once again the fundamentalists would challenge the unbelievers who had through deceit captured so many denominations and churches. This renewed attack on religious liberalism was a central element in fundamentalist conceptions of mass evangelism.

Late in 1949 the Los Angeles revival crusade of Billy Graham was brought to the attention of the nation by the conversion of three celebrities and efforts of the Hearst newspapers. Singer Stuart Hamblen, war hero Louis Zamperini, and wire-tapper Jim Vaus each publicly announced his conversion in the Graham meetings, and the famous "puff Graham" telegram from William Randolph Hearst made Billy Graham

a national figure. Time, Life, and all the secular press reported the activities of the crusade, and once again a fundamentalist evangelist was able to speak to a national audience. The meetings in Los Angeles were extended, and over-night Graham was brought out of the obscurity in which fundamentalists had worked ever since the end of the Machen controversy in the Presbyterian church.

Billy Graham's roots were in fundamentalism. In his youth his family attended an Associate Reformed Presbyterian church, a denomination with separatist origins. He had been converted under the preaching of evangelist Mordecai Ham and had been ordained as a Southern Baptist. Graham attended Bob Jones College for one semester but found the regulations of the school, then located in Cleveland, Tennessee, too confining, and transferred to Trinity Bible Institute near Tampa, Florida, where he spent nearly four years. He then attended Wheaton College, graduating with a major in anthropology. All three schools were strong conservative institutions. John R. Rice had moved to Wheaton partly to be near the college where each of his daughters would attend. Stanley High, in his authorized biography of Graham, makes much of the broadening influence of Wheaton upon Graham, but he has exaggerated the "enlightened" aspect of Wheaton to contrast it with the schools Billy Graham earlier attended.⁸ "During the years Graham was at Wheaton, the school was far more "separated" than it later became. As one of the major centers of the new evangelical movement with which this study is concerned, Wheaton would eventually move a considerable distance from the fundamentalism of Bob Jones and John R. Rice, but this came after Graham's college days. Following graduation

from Wheaton, Graham served as pastor of a small Illinois church for a little over one year, but in 1945 he joined with Torrey Johnson in the work of the new Youth for Christ organization, as its first field representative. He traveled with Youth for Christ rallies throughout the United States and to Europe for three years. During 1947 Dr. W. B. Riley, long-time fundamentalist leader and pastor of the First Baptist Church of Minneapolis, urged upon Graham the presidency of Northwestern Schools, which Riley had founded. Northwestern Schools included a Bible school, liberal arts college, and theological seminary, and Riley hoped to get the young evangelist as his successor as president of the fundamentalist institution. Graham finally agreed on the condition that he be allowed to continue his work with Youth for Christ. Graham served as president of the fundamentalist institution for three and a half years, until the pressures of time and the difficulties of running the schools at a distance caused him to resign.

Through the years as president of Northwestern Schools and in his evangelistic work with Youth for Christ, Graham worked closely with many fundamentalist leaders. His activities were regularly reported in the fundamentalist press. Rice devoted considerable attention to a Graham preaching mission in England early in 1947.⁹ In the fall of 1948, Graham was one of the speakers in a Sword of the Lord Conference on Evangelism held in Chicago. Other speakers included such fundamentalist leaders as Bob Jones, Joe Henry Hankins, Clarence Erickson, Bob Jones, Jr., William McCarrell, and of course John R. Rice. The conference was supported by Wheaton College and was the first of many conferences on evangelism conducted by the Sword.

In June of the same year, Graham had agreed, after serving as interim president for six months, to become the full president of Northwestern Schools. Rice, as a member of the board of trustees of the institution, reported on the event in the Sword.¹⁰ He was warmly enthusiastic about the efforts of the young evangelist-president. He expected the great progress the school had made in the last year "to continue under the strong leadership of Dr. Billy Graham." At the urging of Rice, Graham had been given an honorary doctorate by Bob Jones College after his appointment as president of Northwestern. In his report to the Board of Trustees, Graham had emphasized his loyalty to the program of the late W. B. Riley.

Publicly and privately you know the doctrines for which we stand without compromise. We stand exactly where W. B. Riley stood. . . . Every faculty member and staff member must sign each year our statement of faith which includes all the great cardinal doctrines. We will not tolerate liberalism or modernism, and we will not compromise on any issue in which this school stands so firmly entrenched.¹¹

In the first issue of The Pilot, a Bible-study magazine published by Northwestern Schools, to come out after the death of Riley, Graham assured the constituency of the schools that he would follow in the path of Riley:

For more than a quarter century the Pilot has been one magazine in the field of Christian publications which has never compromised, and has ever made a strong defense of the truth. It has indeed been militant in its stand against Modernism in every form. During the past few weeks some friends have wondered if there would be any change in the Pilot as it enters 1948, a new year, under new leadership. . . . the Pilot will continue to be a voice for fundamental, evangelical Protestantism, and will continue, as the motto has always stated, "Holding Forth the Word of Life."¹²

In March of 1944 Graham had written Dr. Bob Jones, Jr., president of Bob Jones College, concerning the work of that school, "I am absolutely

sold on what it is doing and what it stands for."¹³ This profession of loyalty to the position which the fundamentalist school held was renewed repeatedly during the next years. In early 1947 Graham wrote again to Bob Jones, Jr.: "I want you to be personally assured of my love and loyalty to you, Dr. Bob, Senior, and all that Bob Jones College stands for. I count it a sincere privilege to have had some early training there."¹⁴ In December of 1949, after the breakthrough in Los Angeles, Graham wrote to Bob Jones, Sr.: "Your counsel means more to me than that of any other individual in the nation. Your long years of experience not only as an evangelist but as an educator of Christian young people makes you, as it were, the model toward which we are patterning our lives."¹⁵ Certainly fundamentalists had every reason to expect that the events in Los Angeles in late 1949 heralded a new day for fundamentalism and that here was a man to lead the crusade to restore the old ways to the churches of America. Few could have suspected that the new decade would bring the division of conservative evangelicalism or that the evangelistic efforts of Billy Graham would become the focal point of the division. Indeed, for a time, it appeared that the success of Graham in mass evangelism might move the fundamentalists represented by Jones and Rice further from those represented by McIntire, Ketcham, and the American Council and closer to the men of the National Association of Evangelicals.

After Los Angeles, Graham held meetings in South Carolina, climaxed by filling the stadium of the University of South Carolina in Columbia, and then moved on to a series of meetings throughout the New England area. The New England meetings had been arranged by

Harold Ockenga, pastor of the Part Street Church in Boston, founding president of Fuller Theological Seminary and the "father of New Evangelicalism." The New England meetings were very successful, and Newsweek reported that Graham had "clinched his title as America's greatest living evangelist."¹⁶ Though there were certainly criticisms, the secular press was generally kind to the young evangelist. Many commentators were impressed by his sincerity. By the end of the decade, Graham seemed to have brought revivalism back in much the form that the fundamentalists wanted. Yet, in the early fifties there was an element in the Graham presentation that set him apart from other fundamentalist evangelists. His sermonic style had certainly changed since his days with Youth For Christ. Stanley High commented favorably on this change, noting that he had "come a long way." Referring to Graham in the early days, High wrote: "The way he preached was pretty much in the tradition of the 'Hot Gospeller.' His voice was strident. He was inclined to rant. The same sound effects in politics would, in most places, be called demagoguery."¹⁷ Many, though by no means all, fundamentalists were more accustomed to the more vigorous preaching style. Nonetheless, until near the middle of the decade, all but a small group of fundamentalists were strong supporters of Graham, considering him one of themselves. And this was a view in which Billy Graham concurred. In late 1951 Graham was criticized by Chester Tulga, a fundamentalist of the Conservative Baptist Association. Graham wrote to Tulga:

Mr. Tulga, this is an hour when our nation is standing at the crossroads. If you are going to hurl stones, hurl them at the world, flesh, and devil. Hurl them at the modernists, but please let's not hurl stones at each other. I beg of you that we love each other. None of us will ever agree on everything, but we do agree on the fundamentals. My separation and my theology have not veered one iota from that of W. B. Riley.¹⁸

NOTES

CHAPTER 4

¹Lawrence L. Lacour, A Study of the Revival Method in America: 1920-1955 (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University, 1965), p. 228; William W. Sweet, Revivalism in America (New York: Scribner's, 1944), p. 174.

²Grover C. Loud, Evangelized America (New York: Lincoln McVeagh, 1928), p. 369.

³Robert Shuler, "Mass Evangelism," Sword, February 16, 1945, XI, 4.

⁴Ibid., pp. 1, 4.

⁵Rice, "Union and Independent Revivals," Sword, February 16, 1945, XI, 1, 3.

⁶Lewis Sperry Chafer, True Evangelism (Chicago: Moody Press, 1946).

⁷Rice, "We Take Our Stand," Sword, October 29, 1948, X, 1-6.

⁸Stanley High, Billy Graham (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1956), p. 113.

⁹Sword, February, 17, 1947, IX, 1-3.

¹⁰Sword, June, 24, 1948, X, 2.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²The Pilot, January, 1948, XI, 113.

¹³Billy Graham letter to Bob Jones, Jr., dated March 14, 1944.

¹⁴Graham letter to Bob Jones, Jr., dated January 16, 1947.

¹⁵Graham letter to Bob Jones, Sr., dated December 29, 1949.

¹⁶Newsweek, May 1, 1950, pp. 66-67.

¹⁷High, Billy Graham, p. 86.

¹⁸Graham letter to Chester Tulga, 1951.

CHAPTER 5

THE SWORD AND BILLY GRAHAM

In the Sword, defense and promotion of Billy Graham blended easily with Rice's long-standing advocacy of mass evangelism. In March, 1951, the first major article answering the critics of Graham appeared in the Sword, written by Rice himself.¹ Titled "Billy Graham and Revival Critics," the article began: "There have always been critics of great evangelists. So now there is a rising tide of insistent criticism of Billy Graham." The Christian Herald had been critical of Graham's suggestion that there might be only two years left, asserting that no man knew the day or the hour.² Rice explained that Graham had told him that he had been misquoted, that he referred not to the end of the world but to judgment on America and that though date-setting was wrong, Graham was surely right to warn of impending judgment if America did not mend her ways. An English evangelical publication, The Life of Faith, had printed an article by Thomas Rees which found fault with Graham for a variety of reasons and had been quoted favorably by several American evangelical magazines.³ Rees had said the statistical reports of the meetings were inflated. Rice claimed they were as accurate as they could be under the circumstances and that they were more accurate than most such reports from church organizations. Rees had charged that many of those who came forward in a revival meeting were not genuine converts.

Rice answered that, of course, all who walked the aisle were not first-time converts. Some were "backsliders" in need of rededication, others were not sincere and did not remain true; but this had been the case in every evangelistic ministry, even that of Christ, and there was reason to believe that the relatively non-emotional style followed by Graham would yield a higher percentage of genuine converts than was ordinarily the case. Rice declared:

I do not know what the motive is when people criticize the Billy Graham campaigns, but I believe, whether it is ignorance or jealousy, or a critical, judging heart, that all such talk is wicked and sinful. It does not honor Christ and is not the mark of a devoted Christian brother.

What is wrong with a Christian who cannot be happy over thousands brought to Christ?⁴

Rice also answered criticisms of Graham which had been made by Carl McIntire in The Christian Beacon.⁵ Graham had appeared on the radio program "Town Meeting of the Air" with Dr. Ralph Sockman, identified by Rice as "a well-known Methodist modernist." The subject of the broadcast had been "Do We Need the Old-Time Religion?" Harold Ockenga had questioned Graham, and Truman Douglas questioned Sockman. Rice charged that Sockman had been insincere. He had

... used the weasel words that infidels use, pretending to be Christians when they are not, pretending to believe the Bible when they do not, pretending to worship Jesus Christ when they do not admit His virgin birth or His deity, pretending to believe the fundamentals of the faith and the old-time religion of the Bible.⁶

Graham, however, had made his position clear. He had strongly set forth the great doctrines of the faith. He had stressed the necessity of the new birth, the necessity of a personal surrender to Christ. He had spoken against the "pragmatism, behaviourism, relativism, secularism,

and materialism" of the age. Rice judged that since he had only twelve minutes, he did well to get in "the plain teaching that all are sinners, that the Bible is true, that Christ is the only Son of God, that men must be born again by repentance and faith in Jesus." But the comments of Rice which followed take on considerable meaning in the light of the division which eventually came. Rice wrote:

Dr. McIntire did not like Dr. Ockenga's questions. That is an entirely different question, but I think Dr. Ockenga was honest and straightforward in his position. Dr. McIntire and I are both old debaters, campaigners, controversialists. Very likely I would have demanded to know whether Dr. Sockman believed in the virgin birth and the plenary inspiration of the Bible and the bodily resurrection. No doubt Dr. McIntire would have done so. But at the same time he would probably not have done the wonderful job that Billy Graham did--preaching the gospel to millions of sinners who heard the program. . . . I fear Dr. McIntire's quarrel with Dr. Ockenga and the National Association of Evangelicals leads him to accuse Billy Graham in this matter. . . . I believe Dr. McIntire is thoroughly sincere in his hatred of modernism. I think that his attack on Dr. Billy Graham has not justified the facts and that he ought not to have made it. . . . I think he was a good champion of the historic faith. He was not a debater and did not pull Dr. Sockman out of his hole. But he stated the position of the old-time religion so favorably that Sockman felt he needed to be for it, too.⁷

Still trying to maintain friendly relations with both the NAE and the ACC, Rice was here clearly being pulled closer to the NAE. To Rice at this point, the failure of Ockenga or Graham to clearly distinguish their position from that of Sockman could be excused. The shortness of time, their disinclination to use that time for theological debate, perhaps their lack of certainty regarding the views of Sockman, all provided excuses for the failure. In any case, the gospel had certainly been presented without compromise. Though he might have tried to force Sockman to admit his position, he could well excuse Graham and Ockenga for not doing so. McIntire, however, saw more clearly

the outlines of the new evangelicalism. To McIntire, the fact that Sockman was allowed to give the impression that he too was for the old-time religion was the most important and most unfortunate thing about the program. In his eyes the harm done by leaving the impression with millions of viewers that the gospel which Graham preached and that which Sockman preached were essentially in agreement did harm which far outweighed the good which was done. Further, McIntire rightly saw that this was, not coincidence, oversight, or a lack of time, but a further development of the program against which he had competed for the allegiance of conservative Christians for over a decade. Ockenga would in 1957 describe the strategy of the new evangelicalism: "Instead of attack upon error, the New Evangelicals proclaim the great historic doctrines of Christianity. . . . The strategy of the new evangelicalism is the positive proclamation of the truth in distinction from all errors without delving in personalities which embrace the error."⁸ McIntire saw in this the strategy that had allowed his own ouster from the Presbyterian church and had allowed liberalism to gain control of the major denominations. In time Rice would accept McIntire's view of the Graham-Ockenga strategy, but in 1951 his great concern for mass evangelism caused him to reject the assertions of McIntire that Graham was moving in new and dangerous directions. Rice for nearly six more years would continue to defend Graham against attacks based largely on principles which Rice himself held strongly, but the attacks on Graham came not merely, or even primarily, from fundamentalists such as McIntire, for most fundamentalists still strongly supported Graham. The strongest attacks on Graham came from sources such as the Christian

Century and from sources within conservatism which had long been critical of revivalism. It was much more satisfying to fundamentalists to attack the liberal critics of Graham and claim him as one of their own than to examine the basis of his evangelism too closely. McIntire had already presented, in this editorial on Graham's appearance with Sockman, a critique which included what would be the basic elements of the fundamentalist attack on Graham when the division finally came in 1956. McIntire wrote that the encounter with Sockman gave "an indication of the very nature of the Billy Graham ministry and campaigns."

No questions can be raised concerning apostasy, or the so-called city-wide campaigns do not become city-wide. And one of the conditions that Dr. Graham lays down for his campaign is that all cooperate--liberals, modernists, fundamentalists--and all cooperate in supporting his evangelistic ministry and his ministry supports all of them! Naturally, on such a platform he is not in a position to question or to challenge or literally to denounce the great sin of the apostasy of our age. His ministry is devoid of any recognition or any consciousness of the apostasy in the church, and the converts which are led to the Lord in the campaigns are left to go to "the church of their choice" without any instruction or indoctrination. They go into the modernist, apostate churches, into the National Council of Churches, and some even, as any number have gone, according to reports, into the Roman Catholic Church itself.⁹

Rice challenged each of these assertions. Graham did not make any such demand that all churches be invited to participate, and he challenged McIntire to produce any proof that he had done so. Graham had in fact denounced apostasy in the very radio program under discussion, and Rice pointed to Graham's specific references to the "pragmatism, behaviourism, relativism"--and Rice added the phrase--"which go with modernism." He noted that Graham had charged: "We humanized God and deified man. We outlawed the supernatural." This was a "direct slap at modernism." The weakness of Rice's argument at this point indicated the extent of his

determination to support mass evangelism. As a veteran campaigner against modernism, Rice knew that the examples he was citing bore little resemblance to the kind of defense of the faith which either he or McIntire would normally credit. He then reported that Graham had assured him that he always urged converts to join a "Bible-believing church" and never settled for the mere "church of your choice." Rice further observed that "one converted in a great revival campaign with solid Bible preaching does not usually feel at home in a modernistic church." Rice denied that Graham converts were led to join churches affiliated with the National Council, and he labeled as "false rumor" the charge that Graham converts joined the Roman Catholic Church. Rice quoted Graham in reporting that in Atlanta a committee which had been set up before he arrived in the city had not been set up according to his wishes. Graham had said it was difficult to control the situation when the committee had been set before he arrived, but Graham added, "I will insist that no modernist be given a place of responsibility and leadership in my campaigns." Rice then wrote the following sentences, which suggest that he had been working to hold Graham to the fundamentalist program, even while defending him against the charge that he had left it.

I talked with Billy Graham at some length. He does not claim to know all the answers. He said, "Dr. Rice, I need help." I know that he has leaned heavily on the counsel of Dr. Bob Jones and Dr. Charles E. Fuller, for example. I believe that, considering his youth and the rapidity of his rise to fame, Billy Graham has held his head remarkably clear and kept his course. I believe that God is with him. I believe that those who criticize him and deride him and would hinder his ministry sin against God and must answer for it.¹⁰

Rice concluded the article by returning to the attack on the book by Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer, True Evangelism, and again revealed the context

in which he was then considering the ministry of Billy Graham. Sermons by Graham continued to appear in the Sword, along with news of the Graham campaigns and letters from Graham expressing his confidence in Rice and his appreciation of the support given him in the Sword.¹¹

In April, 1952, the Christian Century printed an analysis of the results of the Billy Graham campaign which had taken place in Seattle during July of the previous year.¹² The analysis was presented as a "factual study" and offered with the greatest show of objectivity. It was to set forth "without comment" the "facts and judgments" gotten from the churches of Seattle through a survey conducted by the author of the article, Arthur Lester Frederick, a liberal and the head of the department of religion in a Methodist college. Predictably, the results of the survey were generally unfavorable toward Graham and were reported by the national news media.¹³ Graham sent to Rice an answer to the Frederick article, asking that it be published in the Sword.¹⁴ Rice again placed the defense of Graham in the context of the defense of mass evangelism, opening the article: "There will always be those who oppose mass evangelism. . . . the great soul winners--Spurgeon, Moody, Torrey, Sam Jones, Finney, and Billy Sunday--have been criticized. Hence it is not surprising that there are critics of the Billy Graham campaigns." Rice noted that "Graham had written asking him to 'go into the matter thoroughly,'" and he quoted Graham, "I feel the entire cause of mass evangelism is at stake in this matter." Graham challenged the validity of Frederick's survey, pointing out that Frederick discounted those converts who were already members of churches, while he felt they were as much converts

as any others. Wrote Graham: "One of the differences in present-day evangelism and the old-time evangelism is that our churches are filled with unconverted people; 65% of our decisions are by church members who have their name on a church roll but have never been born again. Naturally, the modernists do not like their members to be disturbed." In the letter, Graham also addressed charges made by McIntire that modernists had been allowed to cooperate in the campaigns.

Contrary to any rumors that are constantly floating about, we have never had a modernist on our Executive Committee and we have never been sponsored by the Council of Churches in any city except Shreveport and Greensboro--both small towns where the majority of the ministers are evangelical. I do not think you will find any man who has sat under my ministry in any of these campaigns who would testify that I ever pulled a punch.¹⁵

The answer to the Frederick article which Graham included had been written by Dr. Albert J. Lindsey, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Tacoma, Washington. The critique of the Frederick article contained several elements which would become common in evangelical refutation of liberal denigration of the results of the campaigns. It was noted that as chairman of the religion department of the Methodist College of Puget Sound and a known liberal, Frederick "would be definitely prejudiced against Billy Graham and his campaign." It was pointed out that Frederick's survey taken only three months after the campaign, had not reflected the complete results. Frederick had reported only 534 church additions, whereas Lindsey showed that within seven months after the end of the campaign, convert cards returned by pastors revealed 1,971 persons to have been received into churches as a result of the crusade. Lindsey challenged Frederick's implication that converts under fourteen years of age should be discounted, claiming

that "hundreds of thousands of Christians today can trace their conversion to childhood." Frederick had reported that \$67,268.67 had gone to "Graham and team for love offering, TV, "Hour of Decision" broadcast, and various missionary and other causes." Lindsey challenged the "inference . . . that the evangelistic team received the larger portion," when the full financial statement of the crusade revealed clearly that the team had received only \$16,883. Lindsey concluded with an attack on Frederick and the religion department which he headed:

. . . a far more important survey and analysis is that which might be made of the Religious Department of which Dr. Frederick is the head. . . . it would seem to me that a far better usage of Mr. Frederick's time could be made in the evaluation of his department in the light of God's Holy Word. . . . if these facts were clearly made known, some Christian parents . . . would at once remove [their children] from the department if not from the entire school.

I am sure that Professor Frederick was not the logical one to evaluate the spiritual ministry of Billy Graham for he speaks and writes a different language.¹⁶

In commenting on the entire matter, Rice was even more vehement. Frederick was "wholly unsuited" to make such a survey. He was personally a modernist rejecting the "essentials of the Christian faith." Rice described Frederick:

He does not believe the Bible is the infallibly correct Word of God. He does not believe in the virgin birth, the bodily resurrection, nor the blood atonement of Jesus Christ. He is not a Christian in the historic meaning of the term. More than that, he is well known as an opponent to Bible Christianity.¹⁷

In addition, he had written the article for "the notorious spokesman of modernism and unbelief in America, the Christian Century, an article made to sell such an infidel magazine would be suspect by honest people from the start." Frederick could have gotten accurate statistics from the people handling the follow-up of the campaign, but

he chose not to, relying instead on a telephone interview. Rice charged that most of those interviewed had been ministers who were opposed to the campaign from the beginning and could not be expected to have gained much from the campaign. He wrote, "To ask these men who were against the campaign from the start, and who did not attend nor participate if they had been mistaken, and if the campaign was a great success, shows either the most naive and childish understanding of people, or it was a deliberately slanted effort to discredit the Billy Graham campaign." Rice concluded:

. . . we would say that an honest analysis of the Billy Graham campaign in Seattle shows that there are much permanent results, that such a great city-wide campaign gets members for fundamental and sound churches but does not get them for modernist churches. It shows that sound churches get members with less expense and trouble in a great campaign, such as the Billy Graham campaign, than through the ordinary course of church activities without revival campaigns.

. . . The Greek Orthodox ministers, the false cultists and the modernists in Seattle do not like the Billy Graham campaign. So what? Dr. Frederick made some money out of his article, and the modernists got the kind of dope they wanted to get, but honest, Bible-believing Christians may judge of the facts for themselves as given by Dr. Albert Lindsey. . . .¹⁸

This article has been dealt with extensively because it set the pattern which would be followed in many such articles over the next four years. This was a battle more to the liking of Rice. The combatants appeared in their proper roles. To defend Graham against the charges of McIntire made him uneasy, and his defense of criticisms from that direction would require increasing qualification as time went by, but to defend Graham and revivalism against charges brought by the liberals required no hesitation. It was a contest in which the parts were well rehearsed and could be spoken with certainty.

The ever-growing success of Graham was seen as an answer to Rice's longstanding call for the return of union revivals. The crusade in St. Louis was reported in an article headlined, "Pastors Endorse Billy Graham Crusade in St. Louis: First United Effort in Thirty Years Sets Attendance Record."¹⁹ As evidence of Graham's acceptance beyond the conservative evangelical circle began to appear, it was reported with approval by the Sword, seeing in such acceptance a wider opportunity for the preaching of the gospel and the calling of churches back to the old-time religion. In the report of the 1953 St. Louis crusade, the emphasis was upon the wide support of the crusade among the churches, and a past moderator of the St. Louis presbytery of the Presbyterian church, Dr. James W. Clarke, was quoted on the benefits which the crusade had brought to the churches.

In my own church we have felt direct and encouraging results of the Crusade. Of Billy Graham I would say, I appreciate his humble, Christ-like nature, his attitude of understanding and love despite adverse circumstances, and his tremendous emphasis upon the necessity of the converts getting into a local church and going to work in the program of that church.²⁰

Graham had placed no emphasis on the "apostasy" in the churches, and non-evangelical ministers were beginning to find that they could cooperate in a Graham meeting without being embarrassed by specific attack from the pulpit upon non-orthodox positions. The positive proclamation of the gospel could be tolerated as long as there was no specific preaching against "error." Rice was willing to overlook the lack of clear denunciation of error and rejoiced in the widening audience which was being given to the fundamentalist gospel. Though a small group of fundamentalists, led principally by McIntire, continued the attack upon Graham, most were content to wish that he would take a

stronger stand against modernism and continued to claim him as one of their own. Because the broader church was again willing to take notice of the efforts of the conservatives, in the person of Billy Graham, a re-evaluation of the relationship of orthodoxy to the rest of the church would be necessary. Specifically, the doctrine of separation would be called into question. Originally designed to protect evangelicals from infiltration by liberalism, too rigid application of the doctrine seemed to many evangelicals to needlessly hamper efforts to seize the present opportunity to again bring evangelical orthodoxy before the entire church and indeed the nation.

In 1954 the Billy Graham crusade in England gained broader church support than had any American crusade. Enthusiastic support from within the Church of England and from the Free churches was common. In England there had been no fundamentalist-modernist controversy of the dimensions of the American struggle, and in fact many "fundamentalists" had not seen any need to leave the Church of England. The lines between various theological positions were not as tightly drawn therefore, and these lines were not as closely tied to institutional lines. The religious press of England was strongly in favor of the Graham crusade and gave extensive coverage to the preparations. The tremendous success of the meetings tended to further smother criticism, and many churchmen who were far from evangelical were glowing in their praise of the efforts of Graham and the evangelistic team. In May the Sword reported at length the enthusiastic reception which Graham had received from the religious press of England. Rice noted that the religious press had been "virtually unanimous" in endorsement of the campaign

and quoted The Times in support of the assertion. Rice informed his readers that the Church of England Newspaper carried large headlines, and commented on the hope of the huge crowds filling the great Harringay Arena for a renewing of the work which Torrey, Moody, Spurgeon, and Wesley had done. "In their distress at contemporary religion they clutched at the hope that a similar man with a genius for the mass meeting will in 1954 set in train a similar development." A writer in the same publication described the meetings:

There was no sweep of emotion, no tears, no hysteria. Billy Graham is essentially a healthy young man. He has the engaging American habit of saying something far more shrewd and sensible than you had ever expected. You have heard the Scriptures explained just as clearly in your parish church, Sunday after Sunday, and I may say, just as eloquently. But there was a difference.

Another writer professed to have seen growth in the young evangelist. Where two years ago he would have considered Billy Graham just another American "hot-gospeler," he now thought Graham a man "who had been given an exceptional gift by God."²¹ With such leading non-orthodox churchmen as Dr. Leslie Weatherhead giving such enthusiastic support to Graham, Rice might have paused to reflect upon the cause for their enthusiasm. Certainly no indication of such reflection was given in the pages of the Sword. Rice had long warned that no fundamentalist need expect anything but abuse from the modernists and other "un-believers," but the fact of Graham's warm reception by men of far from evangelical viewpoint did not in May of 1954 seem cause for negative comment.

One year later, renewed criticism of Graham by Carl McIntire brought more defense by Rice, but with stronger than ever qualification. Billy Graham had given a lecture at Union Theological Seminary in

February, 1954. Evidently, McIntire had come across the text of his remarks only much later, for over one year later the Christian Beacon printed the lecture which Graham had given, with critical comments by McIntire. In the address Graham had made a positive presentation of the gospel, but had not made any effort to distinguish his position from those commonly held at Union Seminary. He had also during the lecture made reference to having enjoyed a season of prayer in the company of Dr. Jesse Bader, long-time Executive Secretary of Evangelism for the Federal Council and then National Council of Churches; Dr. John S. Bonnell, a non-orthodox Presbyterian; and Charles Templeton, an ex-evangelical. McIntire claimed the address suggested the gospel preached by Graham and that of the modernists were the same. He charged that Graham had compromised at Union Seminary and that he had failed to take a clear stand for the faith.²² Rice was "not pleased that Dr. Billy Graham seemed to mention favorably Dr. Jesse Bader, Dr. Bonnell, and Charles Templeton," but he did not think it was "necessarily a compromise." Rice thought that the circulation of the statement in printed form could well do harm, though it probably did no harm in the message in Union Theological Seminary. Rice was "pleased that Billy Graham took a clear stand that the Bible is the authoritative Word of God." He went on:

No one could possibly say that Billy Graham is a modernist or tending toward modernism from that address.

I personally feel that Billy Graham should have taken a clear-cut stand against modernism in the message, and feel that I would have done so. However, it is only fair to say that that is probably one reason Billy Graham was invited to speak there and I was not. I do not think it wrong to preach to sinners anywhere, provided one does not endorse their sin nor allow people to think he endorses their sin.

Rice claimed that Graham had matured considerably in the year since the address had been made and that he would be much more confident in declaring his position after his crusade in London more firmly established him. He doubted that now Graham would "especially cater to Dr. Jesse Bader, Dr. Bonnell, and Charles Templeton, though he would be a courteous Christian and a good friend to any man who wants his friendship." That the dispute over Graham was pushing McIntire and Rice apart was reflected in the following Rice comment:

I believe that the Christian Beacon is unfortunately more concerned with its fight on the National Council of Churches and its insistence on secondary separation than it is in the Great Commission in getting people saved. So this paper does not think it amiss to harm Billy Graham's ministry. I do think it wrong. I pray for Billy Graham every day. I thank God for him with holy fervor every time he comes to mind. I have unspeakable joy in the great revival campaigns God is giving through him. I do not believe that Billy Graham is infallible. I do not believe he is a superman. I do not necessarily agree with everything he does or says. But I believe he is God's anointed man, being used tremendously in great revivals, and that every Christian in the world ought to rejoice in these revivals.²³

So wrote Rice in April of 1955. Before another two years passed, the Sword would be deeply involved in controversy over the new evangelicism, and Graham would be regularly attacked as the chief spokesman of this movement trying to reform fundamentalism, but in the next months, the promotion of Graham in the pages of the Sword would be extensive, even as the intentions of the new evangelicals became clear. But Rice would long refuse to accept the Graham association with the new evangelic program.

Graham realized the great concern which had been created among fundamentalists by the publication of his Union Seminary address and moved to repair the damage. Turning to personal diplomacy, he arranged

for Rice to be flown to Scotland to visit with him during his crusade there. It was while with Graham in Scotland that Rice had prepared his article on the Union Seminary speech. The May issues of the Sword were devoted in large part to reporting the Scotland crusade. The feature article of the May 13 issue was titled "7 Miracle Days With Billy Graham." In this article the personal kindnesses shown the fundamentalist editor by Billy Graham and the tremendous spiritual impact of the crusades were stressed. Rice commented that in spite of the considerable liberalism in the Church of Scotland, "the Scottish ministers were deeply moved by the London Crusade of Billy Graham. They saw the need to call the people back to God and the Bible and the church."²⁴ The real results of the Graham diplomacy with Rice were reflected in the June 17 issue.

The article was entitled "Questions Answered About Billy Graham" and was a frank discussion of the concerns which had disturbed many fundamentalists.²⁵ Rice included seven questions:

1. Is His Preaching Sound Bible Preaching?
2. Are the Billy Graham Methods Sensible, Spiritual, Trustworthy?
3. Does He Seek the Sponsorship of Modernists?
4. Does He Use and Endorse the Revised Standard Version of the Bible?
5. Does He Sometimes Consort With Modernists?
6. Do the Billy Graham Crusades Strengthen Modernistic Churches and the Cause of Modernism?
7. Does Billy Graham's Future Promise to Turn Out Out-and-Out for the True-to-the Bible Position?

The first two questions Rice answered in the affirmative without reservation. Rice quoted several liberal observers to place Graham theologically with the most rigorous of the fundamentalists. He found no grounds for any complaint with regard to Graham's theology. His revivalistic methodology was also "beyond criticism" in Rice's eyes.

He observed that Graham had over the years become more and more subdued in his preaching and his invitations, and felt that the methods being used by Graham could not be offensive to anyone who believed that the gospel should be preached at all.

To the third question Rice could not be as dogmatic. He first disposed of a particular criticism which had been made of the Scotland crusade. Dr. John S. Bonnell had been reported by the news media to be joining Graham in Scotland at Graham's invitation. Rice informed his readers that the report was in error. Bonnell had recently written an article, published in Look magazine, in which he stated that many Presbyterian ministers did not believe in many of the historic doctrines of Christianity, with the implication that Bonnell concurred in at least some of the opinions he was reporting.²⁶ Bonnell was therefore not in good odor among fundamentalists, and when it was reported that he had been invited to take part in the Scotland crusade, many fundamentalists were very critical of Graham. Rice related that Graham had assured him that he had not invited Bonnell to Scotland, but that he had been brought over by Scottish churchmen who thought Bonnell would be helpful in overcoming certain local liberal opposition to the crusade. Once there Bonnell was given a place on the platform, but according to Rice was never introduced by Graham and was invited to lead in prayer only once, after Graham had gone to the counselling room. Rice reported what Graham told him on the matter:

. . . he felt that he must not have any man speaking for him as an official of the campaign or taking part on the public program of the campaign who is not true on the great fundamentals of the Christian faith. But he feels it is not wrong to preach to modernists and their people, when he can do so without compromise, making his own position definitely clear, and standing

up for Christ and the Bible. Dr. Graham does not feel that he is called or fitted for controversy on many matters of theology, but does feel definitely called to preach a clear-cut Gospel, sharp and clear on the great fundamentals of the faith.²⁷

Referring to the Scotland crusade itself, Rice admitted that certainly there was liberalism within the Church of Scotland, which invited Graham, but that as far as he knew, "no modernist had any place of official leadership or honor." Again Rice admitted that Graham had been sponsored by "some groups which included modernists in the group, but he was not sponsored by modernists, and in every case it was known that the preaching would be fundamental and scriptural." Finally he summarized the understanding he had reached with Graham on the question of modernist sponsorship.

As I understand Billy, he has definitely pledged that he will not have any man in leadership in his campaigns to represent him officially who is not true to the inspiration of the Bible, the deity of Christ, His blood atonement, and such fundamental truths. He does want preachers invited to bring their congregations, just as he wants other groups who need the Gospel to attend.²⁸

Such was the arrangement that had been made in Scotland. It was not satisfactory to either party and would break down before another year had passed. Many fundamentalists would not work with modernists in the crusades, even if the places of leadership were held by evangelicals. Graham would soon see that the denominations would accept no such arrangement. To get genuine cooperation from the denominational leadership, places of power and honor within the crusades would have to go to non-evangelical churchmen. Liberal, or non-orthodox, ministers would hardly be inclined to join enthusiastically in a campaign where they were so obviously barred from leadership. If the crusades were to continue to widen their base of support and thereby increase their

attendance, the liberal churchmen must be brought in, and brought in fully, as partners to the enterprise. On the other hand, Graham was reluctant to lose the fundamentalist backing. Most conservative churchmen would continue to support him no matter what he did, but personal considerations, as well as the fact that the strongest fundamentalists tended to be the most energetic workers, encouraged him to make some effort to keep hard-line fundamentalist support. Further he knew that if he was publicly repudiated by such men as Rice and Jones, the controversy created might cause cautious fundamentalist-evangelical institutions to assume a neutral position, which could seriously weaken his support. Finally Graham was himself a fundamentalist. The concessions which he would eventually make to enlarge his constituency were no doubt painful to him in the beginning. When he privately condemned the Bonnell article to John R. Rice in a hotel room in Scotland in 1955, he was not dissimulating. Seven years before, at a function of the Conservative Baptist Association, he had been asked what he expected from the World Council of Churches meeting in Copenhagen, and he replied, "I believe they are going to nominate the Anti-Christ."²⁹ Graham had traveled much, had met many new people, and been exposed to new forms of worship, but underneath it all, some of the old views remained, and sometimes in his sermons and his public statements they showed through. Though he would soon cast his lot completely and enthusiastically with the new evangelicals, he still would know that many of the men with whom he was working in the crusades were not "born again Christians," as he understood the term.

On the next question, Rice again was forced to hedge. Graham had recommended the Revised Standard Version of the Bible, which had been

published by the National Council of Churches. Rice pointed out that many conservatives had endorsed the New Testament portion, which came out before the Old Testament, and that he himself had allowed the Bible to be sold in the Sword of the Lord bookstore in Wheaton before the controversy brought its weaknesses to his attention. What Rice failed to mention was that he, in accordance with good fundamentalist practice, had discontinued any promotion of the work and had repudiated it, while Graham had allowed his endorsement to stand.

"Does Dr. Billy Graham sometimes consort with modernists?" Rice rightly addressed the question of what was meant by consort, though he did not answer the question. He thought that Graham had "unwisely had fellowship with modernists on some occasions." He did not think there was any intentional compromise involved and was not even sure there had been any unintentional compromise, but Graham did have some friends who were modernists, and they had "done him great harm," and Graham's association with them had "done the cause of Christ harm." He went on to explain:

I am not an enemy of Billy Graham and I am not a critic. I am an out-and-out friend and defender of Billy Graham. And I feel that in general, the idea that Christians must love sinners, must seek sinners, and must not hold themselves aloof from sinners is right. Dr. Graham is a friendly man, a transparently sincere man. He is eager, of course, to reach as many people with the Gospel as possible. I think that when he reported that he, Dr. Charles Templeton, Dr. Bonnell, and Dr. Jesse Bader had a day's prayer meeting in the hotel room in New York, he wrongly left the impression that these men are trustworthy Christians. I do not set out to judge these men, but I do not think that they are reputable and trustworthy Christians. . . . I do not say that these men are unconverted. I do not say that they mean to be dishonest. I do not judge that. I simply say that they ought not to be presented to the public as Bible-believing, Bible-preaching men of God; and I think Billy Graham's influence on the matter has been hurtful to some people, and has certainly put him in an embarrassing position.³⁰

Graham had associated himself in the public mind with these non-orthodox spokesmen and had begun to dissociate himself from the fundamentalists. Rice noted that Graham's personal friendship with "some who are not sound in the faith has caused him to make bad statements in some cases." Rice referred specifically to Graham's rejection of the fundamentalist label in the early days of the Scotland crusade. Graham had been asked to define fundamentalism, but instead replied: "I am neither a fundamentalist nor a modernist, but a constructionist." Rice admitted that certainly there were fundamentalists who were "cantankerous," who were sometimes "overzealous," "unwise, unkind and perhaps not accurate," but he argued that that was not true of all fundamentalists and that the implications of such statements as Graham had made were harmful. Rice went on to say that he was personally a fundamentalist, and so was Graham, and "he ought to have said so." Rice offered the excuse that as a Southern Baptist, Graham might have been turned against the term by its special use in those circles to refer to the small group which had worked with J. Frank Norris. Rice had himself once changed the name of a church of which he was pastor from Fundamentalist Baptist Church to Galilean Baptist Church, in order to escape the stigma of Norris' reputation after he had broken with Norris. Graham might also have been influenced by the fact that McIntire and the American Council leaders who were strong fundamentalists had attacked him "not always wisely and, I think, not always accurately." Graham's harsh words against fundamentalists would "discourage good Christians from supporting and praying for Dr. Graham," but Rice observed that as long as Graham took a clear stand on the fundamentals of the faith, "it is a minor matter whether he calls himself a fundamentalist or not."

On the next question Rice could again be more definite. The Graham campaigns absolutely did not advance the cause of modernism, but instead were serious blows to modernism wherever they were held. Modernism had been "set back greatly in Scotland by the All-Scotland Crusade." Rice reported that the rumors that converts were sometimes sent into modernistic churches were not true. He had personally heard Graham several times instruct the converts that they should go to a church "that preaches and promotes the Bible, a soul-winning church."

Further:

Neither Billy Graham nor his associates ever left the impression, in my hearing, that it did not matter whether they went to a modernistic church or a Bible-believing church. . . . I would say that the influence of the Billy Graham Campaign is always for the fundamentals of the faith and the implication is that Christian people ought to support sound churches and preachers, and that new converts ought to go into sound churches.

To the final question Rice gave an answer which reflected many of the factors which influenced the actions of fundamentalists, both before and after the split with Graham. Does Graham's future promise to "Count Out-and-Out for the True-to-the Bible Position?"

Who can foresee the future? And who can properly weigh the varying tides and currents of influence? I speak humbly. I do not pretend to know all the answers. But I feel that two things ought to be said on this point.

First, I have prayed for long hours and have propagandized in *The Sword of the Lord* and have set an evangelistic pattern, have insisted on evangelistic preaching and so no one has a better right, I think, than I, to rejoice in the great Billy Graham campaigns. Kneeling in a YMCA room in South Chicago fifteen years ago, I prayed till 2 a.m. and begged God to bring back great city-wide campaigns, mass evangelism. I promised God I would leave no stone unturned, that I would suffer any persecution, any privation, any toil He would allow me to suffer, to help bring back mass evangelism. I speak then, with abounding joy of the tremendous campaigns in which multiplied thousands of people have found Christ. Thank God for the upsurge of interest in evangelism. Thank God that He has raised up many blessed evangelists, including Billy Graham. So I think we may say that, on the whole, the

Billy Graham crusades will call out thousands of preachers to preach the Gospel. I think these crusades will send missionaries to the foreign field. I think they will turn multitudes of young people to believe the Bible and to be influenced by historic Christianity. I think that, on the whole, Billy Graham's future promises to have a tremendous impact for the true-to-the-Bible position. And for that we thank God.³¹

No man who had dedicated his life to bringing back mass evangelism could lightly break with the campaigns of Billy Graham. The feelings of Rice reflected those of countless other fundamentalists. Though Graham had much altered the pattern of revivalism with which they were familiar, though he had seemingly deliberately disassociated himself from them, he yet preached the fundamentalist gospel before audiences which no one else could attract, and most fundamentalists continued to claim him as one of themselves. The first point which Rice had made--that his commitment to mass evangelism was too strong to allow him to back away from Billy Graham--could well have stood for the great majority of fundamentalists, but his second point also echoed their views. Rice warned that "some of the greatest men of God have made serious mistakes."³² He then went on to describe how the close association of D. L. Moody with men who were not fully orthodox had had tragic consequences, from the fundamentalist point of view, both in his family and in institutions he founded. Fundamentalists remained convinced that to keep the modernist camel out of the tent, they must be ever vigilant against the nose.

The events of the coming months would push Rice, Jones, and most fundamentalists away from Graham and toward McIntire and the American Council. The spring of 1956 would see many Sword articles defending Graham against liberal critics, and the defense would be made with the old energy, but the controversy with the new evangelicals would continue

to heat up and it would become clear that Graham, the new evangelicals, and most conservative Christians were moving in a direction which the fundamentalists were unwilling to take.

NOTES

CHAPTER 5

¹Rice, "Billy Graham and Revival Critics," Sword, March 2, 1951, XIII, 1-3, 6-8, 12.

²Christian Herald, December, 1950, pp. 12-14.

³The Life of Faith (London: n.d.).

⁴Rice, "Revival Critics," p. 3.

⁵Christian Beacon, January 18, 1951, pp. 1-3.

⁶Rice, "Revival Critics," p. 6.

⁷Ibid., p. 7.

⁸William E. Ashbrook, Evangelicalism: The New Neutralism (Columbus, Ohio: printed privately by Calvary Bible Church, 1970 ed.), p. 5.

⁹Christian Beacon, January 18, 1951, p. 2.

¹⁰Rice, "Revival Critics," p. 12.

¹¹Sword, January 31, 1951, XIII, 2.

¹²Arthur L. Frederick, "Billy Graham's Seattle Campaign," Christian Century, April 23, 1952, LXIX, 494-496.

¹³"Evaluating Graham," Newsweek, April 28, 1952, pp. 84-85.

¹⁴Rice, "Billy Graham's Seattle Campaign Reviewed," Sword, June 6, 1952, XIV, 1, 9, 12.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 9.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 12.

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Sword, June 12, 1953, XIV, 3.

²⁰Ibid.

²¹Rice, "What England Thinks of Billy Graham," Sword, May 7, 1954, XX, 4, 7, 9.

²²Carl McIntire, "Billy Graham at Union Seminary," Christian Beacon, March 16, 1955, pp. 1-2.

²³Rice, "Billy Graham at Union Seminary," Sword, April 22, 1955, XXI, 3.

²⁴Rice, "Seven Miracle Days with Billy Graham in the All-Scotland Crusade," Sword, May 13, 1955, XXI, 1, 4-7.

²⁵Rice, "Questions Answered About Billy Graham," Sword, June 17, 1955, XXI, 1, 9-11.

²⁶John S. Bonnell, "What Is a Presbyterian?" Look, March 23, 1954, pp. 86-93.

²⁷Rice, "Questions Answered," p. 9.

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹G. Archer Weniger, "The Position of Dr. Graham Before He Embraced Ecumenical Evangelism" privately distributed by San Francisco Baptist Theological Seminary, n.d., p. 2.

³⁰Rice, "Questions Answered," p. 9.

³¹Ibid., p. 11.

³²Ibid.

CHAPTER 6

DONALD GREY BARNHOUSE

Following World War II evangelicals were forced by their renewed prominence to consider again their relationships to each other, to other elements of the Christian community, and to the secular society in which they lived. One of the earliest manifestations of the direction in which this re-evaluation would take some evangelicals came in the pages of Eternity magazine, edited by Donald Grey Barnhouse. Barnhouse was a Presbyterian, a graduate of Princeton, and a long-time leader of fundamentalism in the Philadelphia area. Always a strong individualist, Barnhouse had been vocal in his denunciation of apostasy in the Presbyterian church. Because of the unbelief of the leaders of the Philadelphia presbytery, he once refused to participate in a communion service which the presbytery held in his own church. At another time he advised a young minister to shave his head if the hands of the elders and ministers of the presbytery should touch him in ordination. He once wrote: "We have long held that it is necessary for Christians to be out of the Federal Council because of the doctrinal modernism of that body."¹ In the controversy of the thirties he had been tried and found guilty by the Presbyterian church of charging another minister publicly with heresy. The trial was a high point of the fundamentalist-modernist controversy in the Philadelphia area, but Barnhouse had accepted the verdict and remained within his presbytery.

Writing in 1961 after the death of Barnhouse, Paul Hopkins emphasized the importance of the trial: "Had this trial not occurred; he might well have been Philadelphia's leader in the Machen-Independent Board battle in 1935, his relations with the Presbyterian Church would have inevitably been severed, and the course of his ministry totally changed."² As it was, Barnhouse continued his work as pastor of Tenth Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia, operating largely without any connection with the denomination or the local presbytery, carried on an extensive radio ministry, and edited a Bible-study magazine. He developed a personal constituency and spoke in churches across the nation, though he was generally not received in Presbyterian pulpits. In 1944 the death of his wife had a tremendous effect upon him. In the words of Hopkins, "After her death, Donald Barnhouse wandered in a wilderness." He had virtually cut himself off from his denomination and had not developed any fellowship with the independent fundamentalists. Though he had worked with the National Association of Evangelicals, he had caused a disturbance in that organization by his protests over the inclusion of pentecostal and other non-Calvinist groups. He had never worked with the American Council and his failure to leave the Presbyterian church in the years of the Machen dispute prevented any fellowship with that group. His nationwide broadcast over the CBS radio network had ended, and the circulation of his magazine had declined. Again Hopkins wrote: "Some said that he was a ship without a rudder, never having recovered from the loss of his wife. He was a lone wolf. It seemed that he could work with no one--and no one wanted to work with him."³ During 1949, however, he began to recover. The "Bible

Study Hour" was started on several radio stations and grew rapidly. In 1950 the name of his magazine was changed from Revelation to Eternity, and circulation began to increase. In the early 1950s he began to move in a wider circle, and in the January, 1953, issue of Eternity he presented a "New Year's Resolution," the implementation of which would greatly affect his own life and which reflected great changes which would take place in the thinking of many evangelicals.

He first stated that he had early conceived the notion that he must strike out at error wherever he found it: "If it was in some fundamental leader with whom I was in ninety-five per cent agreement, I swung hard at the five per cent." Now, though he was still an editor and must be editorially honest, he would "try to underline the points of agreement and touch as lightly as possible the points of disagreement." He then went on: "And I want to have Christian fellowship with a much wider circle of people." He spoke of his recent efforts to bring spiritual unity to the Christian community in Philadelphia and added:

I want that unity to be extended in many different directions. I want to make my circle of Christian fellowship on the basis of the fact that a man is going to be in Heaven with me. If he is, then why not get a little closer together here and now. Give him the benefit of the doubt on the things we do not agree upon as soon as we find that we agree upon man's complete ruin in sin and God's perfect remedy in Christ. I believe that many of us have been the victims of a religious McCarthyism. Just as the Senator from Wisconsin has yelled "Communist" at almost anyone to the left of center, so there are men who have yelled "Modernist" at any one who disagreed with them on points which are certainly secondary. . . .

Within my own denomination there are men with whom I have not had much fellowship because of ecclesiastical differences. Without in anywise changing my theological outlook, and without lowering my right to unveil, editorially, specific heresy when I find it in print, I want to move closer to many men who are

undoubtedly going to be with me in Heaven, but with whom I have disagreed on denominational emphasis.

Barnhouse assured readers who might not like the new direction he was taking that "there is no deviation whatsoever in what I have written here from all that I have written through the years."⁴

Evidence of the new direction was not long in coming. In the March issue he quoted favorably an unnamed fellow evangelical who had recently been exposed to an atmosphere of "ecumenism, Barthianism, liberalism, as well as conservatism." This evangelical suggested: "These men are earnest and sincere and honest. But many of them are muddled. They just haven't been taught the truth . . . most of them, down underneath, are trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior. . . they just haven't been taught the deeper things." He went on to note that one outstanding lecturer "definitely did not believe in the essentials of Christianity," to which Barnhouse commented: "From such we can turn away." Barnhouse then ended the discussion with the following paragraph:

I am definitely moving in but one direction; trying to be brought closer and closer to the Lord Jesus Christ. But I am finding, as I get nearer to Him that there are true living stones built on Him that are in another wall of the temple of the believers than that in which I am builded. They are around the corner, yes, but I am finding that we meet at the corner.⁵

In the same March issue was printed an article suggesting the seven crucial issues in Protestantism, prompted by a series of articles on the subject in United Evangelical Action, the NAE organ. One of the seven issues linked the "intransigence of the extreme Fundamentalists," who add their traditions and interpretations to the Word of God, with the "apostasy of the Liberals," who subtract from the revelation by lowering the authority of the Bible. Another hit the "neo-legalism" of

many conservatives who substitute a "Drink not, smoke not, dance not" formula for a system of ethics. A third chided conservative failure in social responsibility, and a fourth suggested ecumenical mission effort because it was absurd to project denominational differences on new converts on the field.⁶ Barnhouse was definitely moving away from what had been his fundamentalist position.

In October of 1953 Barnhouse commented on the appearance of G. Bromley Oxnam, a liberal Methodist leader in California, before the House Un-American Activities Committee on charges that he had been a Communist or had served a Communist front organization. While he scorned Oxnam's "false theology," the burden of comment was to criticize those "extreme fundamentalists" who had falsely accused Oxnam of political disloyalty. He declared, "Let us stop calling men Communists who definitely are not so, and turn our efforts to positive proclamation of truth."⁷

In June, 1954, Barnhouse, in an article titled "Where Am I Going?" attempted to assure his readers that he had not made any changes in his theology and that the new directions involved no departure from the faith. He revealed that he had been approached by the National Council of Churches about the possibility of producing some television films that would be distributed under the auspices of the NCC, and indicated that he was working with them toward that end.⁸ In the following year the programs were produced, and Barnhouse became a regular, featured speaker on a NCC television series.

During these years articles critical of fundamentalism became regular items in Eternity. One of the first of these was written by

Vernon Grounds, of the Conservative Baptist Theological Seminary in Denver, Colorado. Grounds was a contributor of such articles through the next years, and the seminary in Denver became a center of the criticism of fundamentalism within the Conservative Baptist group.

Most of the articles followed patterns long established by the liberal critics of fundamentalism in the years of the denominational wars, though these new critics, because they were themselves theological fundamentalists, sometimes were deeper in their understanding. In "Is Love in the Fundamentalist Creed?" Vernon Grounds insisted that the "forgotten fundamental of neighbor-love must be restored to its supreme place in Christian behavior." Admitting that he was a theological fundamentalist because he adhered to the historic doctrines, he complained: ". . . some of us do not like to be tagged fundamentalists. For fundamentalism in many quarters has degenerated into a quarrelsome bickering over incidentals: indeed, it is incidentalism rather than fundamentalism."⁹ The article maintained that fundamentalism had ignored the supreme fundamental: neighbor-love. Barnhouse echoed these sentiments in an editorial in the same issue:

I yearn for fellowship with the whole body of believers in whom Christ dwells through the Holy Spirit. I have come to the conclusion that all true believers have this yearning for wider fellowship and that many are afraid to let themselves go into the love of God, fearing where its current might carry them.¹⁰

In a January, 1955, editorial Barnhouse wondered: ". . . why some men are spending so much time warning of apostasy when the movement is so strongly the other way, and we should be spending our time helping men who were once liberals and who are almost pathetically eager to be received among evangelicals and who, in many cases, are willing humbly to be taught."¹¹

The importance of the impression that liberals were ready to return to the orthodox fold cannot be exaggerated. To many evangelicals and fundamentalists, the battle lines which had been drawn at the end of the controversies of the twenties had not altered. Many had not followed the struggle between neo-orthodoxy and liberalism which had occupied the main-line denominations in the intervening years, and were pleasantly surprised in the late forties and early fifties to learn that liberalism had been routed by a return to a theology of the Word. Few fully understood the complexities of dialectical terminology. To one as anxious for fellowship as Barnhouse, any very thorough examination of the pedigree of these newly found friends seemed uncharitable. Other evangelicals of much the same conviction as Barnhouse did devote considerable effort to a delineation of the lines between orthodoxy and neo-orthodoxy. This was a major concern in the first years of the publication of Christianity Today; but many were too pleased to learn of the demise of liberalism to become much engaged in gift-horse mouth-looking.

Eternity was soon involved in a campaign to demonstrate how strongly orthodox theology was now represented within the denominations and the National and the World Councils of Churches. Barnhouse was deeply involved at the Evanston, Illinois, WCC meet in 1954 and reported extensively on the meeting in Eternity. He recognized that there was still doctrinal division within the WCC, but asserted that "there has been some progress and some remarkable testimony to the truth." The view which had been expressed by Dr. Visser t'Hooft, a WCC official, that the majority of the leaders of the WCC did not endorse the idea of the

organic union of all denominations into one body was emphasized. The report ended with the following words:

The reports must be read and digested. But Christians must realize that there was a great deal of good accomplished at Evanston. There were many people who are Christians in the evangelical sense of the word who were at Evanston and who were discussing great problems on a high level of Christian thinking. There were also some men whom we consider to be apostates who were among the delegates but they seemed to be outnumbered and their influence did not seem to weigh heavily. . . .¹²

By 1957 serious articles examining neo-orthodox theology began to appear, and some of the earlier naive optimism cooled, but Barnhouse had by then cast his lot with the mainstream and his involvement with the NCC and the WCC deepened.

The extent to which his contact with the denominations and the councils affected his thinking was revealed by the position he took in the controversy over religious broadcasting. Throughout the 1950s the NCC attempted to put an end to paid religious broadcasts. Only time donated by the stations would be used for religious broadcasts, and this would be distributed through the councils of churches and the religious agencies of the other major faiths. Naturally, the evangelicals who were the largest buyers of commercial religious broadcast time feared that any such arrangement would greatly lessen their access to the airwaves. This battle over the airwaves was a major project of the National Association of Evangelicals through its affiliate, the National Religious Broadcasters, throughout the decade. In the spring of 1957, Barnhouse came down in a compromise position which in many minds put him closer to the NCC position than to that of the evangelicals. Whatever might be their disposition on other ecumenical questions, on this issue evangelicals were almost unanimous in their opposition to

the NCC position. Barnhouse, on the other hand, used the opportunity to press for more contact between the evangelicals and the NCC men.

He asserted that the issue was very complex, and had not been presented fairly by either side. Both parties were said to be fighting battles of an earlier day, reliving the fundamentalist-modernist controversy as "certain sections of the country are still fighting the Civil War." Fundamentalism had pursued the course of separation in the "vain hope for a pure church." He charged:

In its effort to defend the faith, fundamentalism has become defensive, suspicious, separatistic and belligerent, its creed too often a barren legalism substituted for the vital life-changing force that is Christianity.

Seemingly motivated by fear, some fundamentalists are harshly critical of those with whom they do not agree, and it has been all too easy for them to make the National Council of Churches and its various commissions the symbol of theological heresy, lowest-common-denominator inclusivism, socialism and Communism.

Both the NAE and the NCC were said to be "culpable in making public statements derogatory of the efforts of another group of Christians without first trying to understand better the differing view." Barnhouse probably thought he was taking a middle position, but he had actually presented a rebuke to the leaders of the NAE. He had rejected their charges that the NCC was trying to put evangelical broadcasting off the air. The final sentence of the piece concluded: "Ultimately, Christian broadcasting is not imperiled except by the sins of pride and self-seeking that too easily beset the whole Christian church"--it is clear that he had presented a rebuke to the leaders of the NAE.¹³ The public reactions to the editorial also corresponded to this view. The Barnhouse position won praise from the NCC leadership, but was held to be a disappointment by James DeForest

Murch, president of the National Religious Broadcasters.¹⁴ By this time Barnhouse was beginning to show coolness to the activities of the NAE generally. As he moved closer to the NCC he came more and more to see the NAE as an obstacle in his vision of evangelicals taking their place in the broader Christian fellowship. In November of 1957 an article in Eternity written by close Barnhouse associate Walter Martin reported on the Faith and Order Conference of the NCC-WCC which had been held at Oberlin, Ohio. Though there were signs in the article that some sophistication in dealing with ecumenical activities had developed, the enthusiasm for such activities had also grown. Martin stated in part:

Radicals on both sides will proclaim that it was a waste of time, and that true unity in the Christian Church can never be achieved this side of Heaven. However, we ought not to despise any sincere effort in that direction that is grounded upon the sound doctrines of the Word of God and the love which our Lord commanded us to have one for another. The World Council of Churches is making such an attempt, though there are still elements within it that are hostile to the historic faith of Christianity and which, although weakened over the past decade, continue as a threat to true Christian unity.¹⁵

In the spring of 1957, Eternity had offered the following comments in a review of Murch's history of the NAE:

As one peruses the pages of this well-written book, one question arises in his mind. The NAE was founded in days of great theological controversy, when the forces of modernism were adamant in rejecting fundamental Christianity. There was no room in the Federal Council for the conservative doctrine held by those in the NAE. . . .

Today, as Dr. Murch notes, the issues have changed, and one of the principal changes is in the attitude of present-day cooperative Protestantism as represented by the National Council of Churches. The NCC is putting far less stress on uniformity, and much more on ecumenicity. The question then arises: What is the NAE's *raison d'être* today? Today, as never before, the church of Christ must show the world that it not only loves its Lord, but all believers.¹⁶

In the years left to him, Donald Barnhouse became the chief NCC defender before the evangelical community. He had earlier defended the WCC leader from behind the Iron Curtain, Joseph L. Hromadka, calling the charges that he was a Communist ridiculous, and when Hromadka acknowledged in print his personal Communist convictions, Eternity commented: "The Holy Spirit still blows where He wills, and if He chooses to blow through a Hromadka, who are we to question it? Although as Western believers we may detest his political and economic views, this must not blind us to the warm spiritual witness that Hromadka has given to his faith in Christ."¹⁷ When in 1960 the NCC was involved in a dispute with the Air Force over a training manual which suggested Communist influence within the NCC, Barnhouse printed his own lengthy "impartial investigation" which cleared the organization and was largely devoted to attacking the critics of the NCC.¹⁸ Eternity regularly reported NCC and WCC activities, interpreting them in a way likely to encourage evangelical support. At the same time Barnhouse continued to widen the circle of his Christian fellowship, including groups which he had formerly scorned. In May of 1958 he urged the local council of churches in Philadelphia to oust the Unitarians, saying that with them excluded, the way would be clear for evangelical participation in the council's activities.¹⁹ This action indicated the fullest development of Barnhouse's extension of the circle of his fellowship. He declared in December of 1958: ". . . if any man truly believes that Jesus Christ is Lord and the Savior of the world, that I must have fellowship with him. I may not be separated from him because I don't like him personally; I may not be separated from him because I think he

has some queer doctrines." After challenging his audience to produce one verse in the Bible which says that they must be separated from some other member of the Body of Christ on the basis of doctrine, he said:

We should be separated from all unitarianizing tendencies, from anybody who does not believe that Jesus Christ is God, for they are not believers. They are the counterfeits, and they are outside. But anybody who believes that Jesus Christ is God, then we must get together with him. Sure, some of them will believe in certain doctrines that we repudiate utterly.²⁰

Thus, Barnhouse had fully committed himself to the WCC basis.

In his journey from theological separatism to theological inclusivism, Barnhouse was not typical of the evangelicals with whom this study is concerned. He was an extreme individualist at all times, as belligerent preaching a "loving" inclusivism as he had been preaching a "divisive" separatism. His enthusiasm for the NCC and WCC was unique among important evangelical leaders. His individualistic temperament blinded him to institutional considerations which were important to other evangelical leaders trying to move fundamentalism to a more central position. The traumatic nature of his personal conversion from separatism to inclusivism also set him apart from other evangelicals. Most evangelicals who moved away from separatism did so more for strategic than personal reasons, though the desire to be more at peace with the church as a whole was always a factor in such a movement. In some respects, Barnhouse was an embarrassment to the men with whom this study is primarily concerned. He was moving in the direction in which they were moving, and his large personal following made him an important ally. Eternity carried many articles written by men such as Vernon Grounds, Bernard Ramm, and Carl Henry, who were leaders in the effort to refashion fundamentalism. But Barnhouse's eccentric, personal

approach set him apart from the "mainstream" of this effort to bring fundamentalism into the mainstream. He felt personally much that the others accepted for strategic reasons. His approach to the complex issues often seems naive, and certainly lacks the depth of understanding found in the writings of men such as Carl Henry or Harold Lindsell. Where some were willing to work with non-evangelicals in a Graham crusade for the sake of the meeting, Barnhouse really seemed to seek their fellowship, and in the end came to be more "at home" in their presence than with other evangelicals. Nonetheless, while the changes in Barnhouse were more dramatic and came with an intensity that was unique, his career after January, 1953, reflected changes that were occurring within evangelicalism. One writer who was very critical of these changes stated that in Eternity the emphases of the movement were presented in the broadest fashion.²¹

It was perhaps significant that at his death in 1960 the eulogy given him in Christian Century was warmer than that in the evangelical Moody Monthly.²²

NOTES

CHAPTER 6

¹William E. Ashbrook, Evangelicalism: The New Neutralism (Columbus, Ohio: printed privately by Calvary Bible Church, 1970 ed.), pp. 6-7.

²Paul Hopkins, "What Made the Man?" Eternity, March, 1961, p. 37.

³Ibid.

⁴Eternity, January, 1953, inside covers.

⁵Eternity, March, 1953, p. 5.

⁶Eternity, March, 1953, p. 9.

⁷Eternity, October, 1953, p. 8.

⁸Donald Grey Barnhouse, "Where Am I Going?" Eternity, June, 1954, pp. 7, 39-40.

⁹Vernon Grounds, "Is LOVE in the Fundamentalist Creed?" Eternity, June, 1954, p. 13.

¹⁰Eternity, June, 1954, p. 15.

¹¹Eternity, January, 1955, p. 8.

¹²Eternity, October, 1954, pp. 8, 40.

¹³Barnhouse, "Who's Putting Religion Off the Air?" Eternity, April, 1957, pp. 14-15, 34-35.

¹⁴Eternity, May, 1957, pp. 20-21.

¹⁵Walter Martin, "Oberlin Report," Eternity, November, 1957, p. 43.

¹⁶Eternity, May, 1957, p. 26.

¹⁷Eternity, November, 1957, p. 28.

¹⁸Barnhouse, "Communism and the National Council of Churches," Eternity, September, 1960, pp. 6-9, 30-33.

¹⁹Eternity, May, 1958, p. 4.

²⁰Eternity, July, 1958, p. 20.

²¹Dennis M. Walton, An Identification of New Evangelicalism (Minneapolis, Minn.: Central Press, 1960), p. 10.

²²Christian Century, December 7, 1960, LXXVII, 1948; Moody Monthly, January, 1961, p. 15.

CHAPTER 7

THE DEVELOPING DIVISION

In 1947 the first significant, public statement of the need to move fundamentalism in new directions was made by Dr. Carl F. H. Henry in a series of lectures published under the title, The Uneasy Conscience of Modern Fundamentalism. Henry's uneasiness was primarily over what he saw as the failure of fundamentalism to develop an adequate system of social ethics. He wrote in the preface to the book:

Those who read with competence will know that the "uneasy conscience" of which I write is not one troubled about the great biblical verities, which I consider the only outlook capable of resolving our problems, but rather one distressed by the frequent failure to apply them effectively to crucial problems confronting the modern mind. It is an application of, not a revolt against, fundamentals of the faith, for which I plead.

No very great notice of the book was taken at the time, but about the newly founded Fuller Theological Seminary and a few other centers, discontent with the existing contours of evangelical orthodoxy began to find expression.

Harold John Ockenga was the founding president of Fuller Theological Seminary, directing its affairs from Boston where he was pastor of the prestigious Park Street Church. The new seminary, located in Pasadena, California, soon drew to itself a group of young scholars determined to make serious changes in the shape of modern fundamentalism. (At the time, fundamentalism was a term often used to cover all shades of evangelical orthodoxy, especially that which

found expression in independent institutions.) In an address opening the seminary, Ockenga called for a "new evangelicalism" and in so doing gave a name to a movement which eventually would divide evangelical orthodoxy into evangelicalism and fundamentalism, with by far the largest part of the orthodox group represented in evangelicalism. In its new formulation fundamentalism was to lose its pugnacity; it was to challenge unbelief on a higher intellectual level without resort to obscurantism; its divisive separatism was to be moderated; and above all, it was to develop a comprehensive social philosophy. Ockenga, Henry, Harold Lindsell, Edward John Carnell, and the older Dr. Wilbur Smith would develop at Fuller the outlines of this "new evangelicalism." When Ockenga stepped down as president, Carnell took his place. The seminary over the years established a claim to scholarship that no thoroughly evangelical seminary had enjoyed for many years. For the first years the production of a serious body of apologetic literature occupied the talents of the young men at Fuller. At the fourth annual convention of the National Association of Evangelicals in the spring of 1946, Dr. Wilbur Smith had urged that evangelicals "undertake a new world-wide program for the creation and distribution of the finest possible literature, that will properly and truly interpret the Holy Scriptures, exalt the Lord Jesus Christ, combat the errors that so viciously penetrate the minds of the mass multitudes from the subtle deceptions of skeptical and naturalistic philosophies." Later in the same address, he stated:

I think we need a new, strong, scholarly work that will deal a hard, staggering blow to this diabolical theory of evolution. I call it a theory. I am more persuaded today than ever that the whole concept of Darwinian evolution, and the so-called

origin of species by natural selection, is based upon nothing but the speculation of men. . . . [We need men] trained in science, who know all the so-called evidence for evolution in an authoritative way, and can give us a volume that can be depended upon, and that will in a noble, commendable, scholarly way expose this vicious modern concept.²

In the preface of a book by Carl Henry published in 1946, Gordon H. Clark, a scholar not at Fuller but associated with the Fuller effort, complained that the great need of the age, and one too long neglected by fundamentalism, was a "contemporary Christian literature that studies all phases of intellectual interest. . . ."³ This book by Henry, Remaking the Modern Mind, was the first in an impressive list in the area of Christian apologetics which appeared near mid-century and were produced by those associated with Fuller. Edward John Carnell in 1948 published his Introduction to Christian Apologetics and was joined in 1949 by Bernard Ramm with Problems in Christian Apologetics. Ramm, like Clark in close sympathy with the men at Fuller through teaching at other institutions, added Types of Apologetic System in 1953, and Clark himself produced a Christian View of Men and Things in 1952.⁴ Though later additions were made, the strict apologetic effort centered in these years. Further, in the later additions there was often a decided departure from the traditional pattern of orthodox apologetic literature.

In the fall of 1954, the publication of The Christian View of Science and Scripture, by Bernard Ramm, then teaching at Baylor University, stirred new interest in evolution among evangelicals and revealed the direction in which an increasing number of evangelicals were moving.⁵ It appeared that many evangelicals were willing to abandon the effort to "strike a death blow" to the theory of evolution. Smith himself called the book the most significant discussion of the question in fifty years.⁶

Christian Life commented that Ramm's book was the "most vigorously reviewed book among evangelicals since the Revised Standard Version" and observed that the volume had either been "battered or baked" by virtually every conservative publication.⁷ As Christian Life indicated, the reactions to the book were extremely varied. Some saw it as a wholesale sell-out to the theory of evolution while others thought that orthodoxy had been set in a context which would make it a viable competitor for the loyalties of modern men. The reactions to the book revealed that the split in evangelical orthodoxy, which would be nearly complete by the end of the decade, was not visible in 1955. Arthur Kuschke wrote a sharply critical review for The Presbyterian Guardian, which was reprinted in the Sword of the Lord. Christian Life called it, "most penetrating of all. . . ." H. O. Van Gilder offered only mild objections in The Baptist Bulletin, while John Devries was sharply critical in the Calvin Forum.⁸ The general reaction, however, was warmer, and many evangelicals seemed ready to abandon the cause which had been championed by Bryan so many years before.⁹ The review by Joseph Bayly published in Eternity was one of the more critical non-fundamentalist reviews.¹⁰

The most important new element in Ramm's book lay in his distinction between the "cultural" and the "transcultural" in the Bible.¹¹ While this was a distinction long made outside of fundamentalist or evangelical circles, and one with which any educated fundamentalist would be familiar, its prominence in a major work by an evangelical was a cause for considerable attention. Ramm claimed to be making no challenge to the doctrine of inspiration, stating: "The author of this

book believes in the divine origin of the Bible. If what follows disagrees with cherished beliefs of the reader, be assured it is not a difference over inspiration but over interpretation."¹² But any tampering with the doctrine of the inspiration of the Bible was sure to come under careful scrutiny, and his statements were subjected to the closest analysis. Joseph Bayly asked:

Why is it necessary to distinguish between the cultural and the transcultural? Seemingly, to explain supposed errors of (prescientific) fact while retaining the theological concepts in an error-less condition. If this conclusion seems too harsh, observe that Dr. Ramm does not accept the following statement by Francis Pieper, "But remember: when Scripture incidentally treats a scientific subject, it is always right, let 'science' say what it pleases; for all Scripture is given by inspiration of God."

Later, Bayly concluded that "this particular remedy for an obscurantist hyperorthodoxy seems disquietingly similar to the neo-orthodox remedy for liberalism's rejection of the Old Testament on critical grounds." This judgment was followed by a comment that a liberal spokesman, L. Harold DeWolf, had recently observed among the fundamentalists "significant conciliatory gestures toward their more liberal contemporaries." After noting Ramm's statement that the language of the Bible indicates that the flood described in Genesis was a universal flood, Bayly came to the central point of his criticism of Ramm:

At this point, although the author claims that inspiration is not involved--only interpretation--we have met one of the basic problems which could conceivably change evangelical Christianity's view of Scripture and inspiration. If the Biblical narrator presented an erroneous view of the flood's universality in language which convinced readers that mankind was destroyed until modern geology showed that it was merely local, can we any longer honestly claim to believe that divine inspiration has protected the whole Bible from error?

Further, if the lack of modern scientific corroboration of the universal flood leads us to abandon the clear language of

Scripture, how can we logically maintain our belief in the at least equally difficult and similarly uncorroborated story that a man who had been in a grave three days dead came forth alive. Dr. Ramm will no doubt maintain his own faith in Jesus Christ, in the inspiration of the Word, in the Virgin Birth, and in other areas which shine from this book and his life. But the test of the Biblical nature of the theory will come in the next generation if this view sweeps the evangelical field.¹³

In a three-page review, fundamentalist John R. Rice was even more critical, accusing Ramm of watering down the doctrine of the inspiration of Scripture. Rice charged:

. . . it is seriously untrue to the Scriptures. It does not represent Bible-believing Christianity. It makes unnecessary and hurtful concessions to unbelieving scientists. It casts reflections on the best fundamental preachers and teachers who defend the faith. . . . [We urge] the book be avoided as not representing the conservative viewpoint, as being dangerously slipshod and inaccurate as a representation of the scriptural position about inspiration.¹⁴

In presenting what he called "progressive creationism," Ramm challenged another position long held by conservative evangelicals. Bayly commented that Ramm's view "reflects the changing attitude among evangelical Christians toward evolution (whether it is called theistic evolution, progressive creationism, or some other name)."¹⁵ Another noted that Ramm had written what many evangelicals had been saying in private for ten years and praised Ramm for bringing the matter into the open.¹⁶ Indeed, the fact that no enduring controversy was generated by the appearance of the book and that apart from the separatist fundamentalists few in the discussion expressed their views with much heat would tend to support this view. Few took up detailed discussion of the question of evolution itself, and there was far less concern about the endorsement of "progressive creationism" than about the principle of deferring to scientific thought in questions involving the validity of Biblical statements. Neither Bayly nor Rice specifically raised

the question of evolution except in the context of challenging Ramm's view that in the area of scientific statement the conclusions of academic investigation should have precedence over clear Biblical statements because the Bible is "prescientific."

One element in the Ramm book drew lengthy criticism from Rice and was an element which would occupy a prominent place in much evangelical literature in the next years. This was Ramm's tendency to establish the intellectual respectability of his own position by unfavorable reference to the work of earlier orthodox spokesmen. Particularly singled out for disparagement were Harry Rimmer, a Presbyterian pastor, and William Jennings Bryan. When it is realized that even today the Sword of the Lord occasionally publishes a Bryan sermon on the subject of evolution, the difference in viewpoint between Rice and Ramm becomes apparent. Rice replied to Ramm's criticism of these long-dead defenders of the faith:

I heard Bryan in his magnificent defense of the faith in the University of Chicago. I know that multiplied thousands of questioning college students over America were turned back to God by his addresses. I do not appreciate a sneer at Bryan. I agree with Bryan and disagree with infidels, Clarence Darrow and Scopes. I knew well and loved Dr. Harry Rimmer. I know that the dynamite of God was in his message and that he helped establish multitudes in the faith and that he put to rout, again and again, the unbelievers who opposed him, in high schools, colleges, and on the public platform. I think that it is a poor business for any Christian to try to curry favor with the scientists and scholars by sneering at Dr. Harry Rimmer.¹⁷

Perhaps a more telling criticism on this point was made by the son of Dr. Rimmer. He pointed out that to analyze works of decades past by reference to contemporary scientific views was less than fair and suggested that Dr. Ramm's own book would probably show up poorly in an analysis written in 1990.¹⁸

Another element which drew fire from Rice, and which became a fixture in the new evangelical literature, was the tendency of Ramm to go far in accepting criticism for orthodoxy in the past. In one instance he, in behalf of theology, accepted the blame for Martin Luther's belief in the curative powers of manure, and both Rice and Bayly were quick to dispute the point. As Ramm used this as a key illustration in a chapter praising science for the purifying effect which it had had on theology, Rice made the rejoinder: ". . . why should anyone in the world charge such nonsense to 'theology.' The silly views which Luther had about manure were the views of science, not of theology! He got those from the science of his day. Science changes." In another place Ramm remarked that it was not intellectually respectable to condemn science as satanic while enjoying the fruits of modern science. Rice insisted: "No person I ever heard of condemned true science as satanic." The more Ramm tried to render his own evangelical position respectable, by demonstrating how far it had come from an unworthy earlier position, the more Rice felt the rebuke. Rice informed his readers:

The favorite epithet of Dr. Ramm in his book is "hyper-orthodox." Sometimes he uses the word "fundamentalist" as approximately a synonym for the hyperorthodox. He feels very bad about what he calls "the ignoble tradition which has taken a most unwholesome attitude toward science, and has used arguments and procedures not in the better traditions of established scholarship." And the hyperorthodox, these fundamentalists, Dr. Ramm belabors page after page.

Rice complained that the bibliography was divided into four categories, the fourth of which was labeled: "Fundamentalist Works of Limited Worth Due to Improper Spirit or Lack of Scientific or Philosophic or Biblical Orientation." And Rice further complained that under this last

category were placed "practically all the good books in defense of the faith. . . ." ¹⁹ In the reactions to Ramm's book, many of the differences in viewpoint which would shape the coming divisions in conservative evangelicalism were revealed. At that time, however, the lines were not all neatly drawn. As already noted, Eternity, itself critical of the fundamentalism against which Ramm set himself, warned that any weakening of the doctrine of inspiration would be dangerous. Dr. Russell Mixer, on the science faculty of Wheaton College, one of the leading evangelical institutions, gave the book the strongest kind of endorsement, stating: "His opponents have not caught up to his enlightened thinking." Dr. Robert Culver, another Wheaton professor, gave the book a qualified endorsement in the Journal of the American Scientific Affiliation, as did other reviews appearing in that journal. On the other side, Dr. Harold Lindsell, then dean of administration at Fuller Seminary, joined himself to Bayly's criticisms and stated that he had others besides. ²⁰ But Lindsell, Bayly, and the fundamentalists were in the minority, and in the years to come it became clear that evangelicalism was indeed moving in the direction which Ramm had pointed.

A series of articles, published in Christian Life between March of 1955 and May of 1956, concerning the origin of the universe and the development of life reflected thinking much like that of Ramm. The writers agreed to the great age of the earth and to the use of natural development over a long period of time for the creation of man, though they were vague on the exact meaning of this development and said little that disagreed explicitly with either the accepted findings of modern science or the clear statements of Scripture, and they certainly

stopped well short of a comprehensive endorsement of the system of evolution.²¹ These articles received little public criticism, and the letters columns of Christian Life, though they certainly contained critical letters, did not reveal any widespread opposition to the articles.

In February, 1956, an important article appeared in Eternity, written by Dr. Vernon Grounds, then president of the Conservative Baptist Theological Seminary.²² Grounds had earlier produced a careful discussion of the distinctions to be made between evangelicalism and fundamentalism, which was circulated in privately mimeographed form, but it had not been published. In June, 1954, Grounds had complained in print that "some of us do not like to be tagged fundamentalists."²³ In 1954 he wrote as one within a movement attempting to correct its abuses, while by February of 1956 he seemed to be writing as a person within one movement--evangelicalism--attempting to defend it against charges which should rightly be placed against another movement--fundamentalism. This new article contained the first sustained public attempt by an evangelical scholar to dissociate himself from fundamentalism. The article was entitled "The Nature of Evangelicalism" and began with the following sentence: "What is the nature of Protestant Orthodoxy, that embodiment of historic Christianity which sometimes bears the label evangelicalism, sometimes the label fundamentalism?"²⁴ As was suggested in the introduction to this study and in the first chapter, there had long been uneasiness with the fundamentalist label among a considerable segment of evangelical orthodoxy. Certain leaders of independent evangelical efforts had been embarrassed by the

vehemence with which fundamentalist leaders, such as Carl McIntire, John R. Rice, or Bob Jones, opposed non-orthodox religious figures. The point to be made here is that this had, indeed, long been the case. Rice remarked upon the fact from time to time in his paper, expressing the wish that these brethren would "contend more earnestly for the faith." Feelings concerning McIntire were of course stronger, because he often attracted the attention of the secular press whereas other fundamentalist leaders did not. But there had not before been felt the necessity to engage in public examination of the differences between themselves and the fundamentalist leaders. All considered themselves part of one movement even though they recognized differences within the movement. All fundamentalists were evangelicals, and all evangelicals were fundamentalists. As noted earlier, Jones and Rice had been active in the early days of the NAE and had faulted McIntire for his criticism of that group. The co-operating board of the Sword of the Lord included men such as Dr. V. Raymond Edman, president of Wheaton College; Robert A. Cook, president of the Youth For Christ organization; and Billy Graham himself. These men would be on the evangelical side when the division came. Rice had served on the board of Northwestern Schools while Graham served as president. Only after 1955 did the tension become such that co-operation became first difficult and then impossible; Before, they had recognized a kinship which allowed them to work harmoniously together. Only in 1956 did it become necessary so to define evangelicalism as to distinguish it carefully from fundamentalism, and only then did it become necessary so to define fundamentalism as to carefully distinguish it from evangelicalism. In 1946, J. E. Wright

could speak to the delegates of an NAE convention of "Fundamentalists--Conservatives--Bible-believing Christians" and define them by adding "whatever term you wish to use to describe those who stand for the historical doctrinal positions of the Christian church."²⁵ As Vernon Grounds wrote ten years later, it was beginning to seem necessary to distinguish carefully divisions among the group of Christians of whom Wright spoke in 1946.

In the sentence quoted above from Grounds' article (1956), he placed in proximate equation: Protestant orthodoxy, historic Christianity, and evangelicalism. He then described what this position shares with other religious positions and where it is forced to part company with them. After in brief compass distinguishing evangelicalism from the Eastern religions, Islam, Judaism, liberal Protestantism, neo-orthodoxy, and Roman Catholicism, he turned to relate it to fundamentalism. If fundamentalism was allowed to mean "tenacious insistence upon the essential and central dogmas of historic Christianity," he would be content to identify evangelicalism with fundamentalism. He rejected this identification, however, if fundamentalism was to be taken as it was "ordinarily construed." That he had considerable sympathy with such construction was made clear in his next comments:

A thoroughgoing evangelical recognizes with a wry smile the truth in the liberal jibe: "Fundamentalism is too much fun, too much damn, and too little mental!" A thoroughgoing evangelical realizes that with unfortunate frequency Protestant orthodoxy has degenerated into a rabid sectarianism which furnishes many recruits for the lunatic fringe of religion. But if America is not adequately represented by the conduct of some irresponsible tourists, neither is evangelicalism adequately represented by every snake handler, every holy roller, every bigoted fanatic. No, evangelicalism ought to be judged by its truly representative creeds and spokesmen. So, a thoroughgoing evangelical endorses the dictum

of J. Gresham Machen: there is no good reason why, after two thousand years of glorious history, main-stream Christianity should suddenly degenerate into an ism and become fundamentalism. Actually, instead of being an ism of recent vintage, evangelicalism is main-stream Christianity in modern form.²⁶

Perhaps the greatest difference between evangelicalism and fundamentalism was, and is, this determination to regain for Bible-believing orthodoxy a status within mainstream Protestantism. The fundamentalists had written off the mainstream as hopelessly apostate and pointed to their premillennial eschatological system to show that biblically this was to be expected. They accepted a subculture status and often rejoiced in their alienation from the "apostate" mainstream. The evangelicals insisted that orthodoxy was the center of the mainstream and that though the Protestant community had moved toward liberalism in past years, it was now moving back toward orthodoxy. Since the debacle of the twenties, evangelical orthodoxy had been able to exert little determinative influence upon American society, even upon the Protestant church establishment. To the evangelicals this was intolerable. The fundamentalists of course welcomed influence whenever it fell within their grasp, but the determination to retain the theological integrity of orthodoxy dwarfed every other consideration in their minds and in time rendered them largely insensitive to the opinions of those not part of their movement. Thus, while Ramm would bend far in an attempt to make orthodoxy as intellectually respectable as possible, Rice would examine his efforts under the title: "Shall We Appease Unbelieving Scholars?"²⁷

These "new evangelicals," as they were being labeled and were labeling themselves, were certainly not engaged in any headlong rush toward

unbelief. In the context of the total Protestant community, all the principals in this study were, and nearly all are, extreme conservatives. Even to this day, the Christian Century refers to them all as fundamentalists and has not recognized any new "evangelical" category. Grounds made it clear that evangelicalism was both a positive witness, and a protest:

Negatively, evangelicalism is a protest, a witness against the the excessive, unnecessary, eviscerating concessions which liberal Protestantism has made to the modern-world view. Evangelicalism is concerned about the preservation of Christian essentials, convinced that liberalism has needlessly surrendered the very fundamentals of its historic faith. Evangelicalism aspires, consequently, to re-state and defend the irreducible minimum of the Gospel. . . .²⁸

Every evangelical spokesman accompanied whatever complaints he might have against fundamentalism with strong declarations of loyalty to fundamentalist theology, but those who were the named or unnamed targets of such complaints recalled that virtually every movement away from orthodoxy had presented itself as a program for re-stating the Gospel in such a way as to make it acceptable to "modern minds" and thereby preserve its essential features. The statements of those unhappy with fundamentalism as it actually existed continued, therefore, to be subjected to strong criticism, despite their protestations and sincere declarations of belief in the essentials. When questions of personality became involved, the criticism on both sides became quite bitter. The dispute bore most of the marks of a family disturbance.

When Grounds began to present the specific emphases which characterized the evangelical program, again differences with the older fundamentalism appeared. He first stated the evangelical adherence to an "indefectible Word of God" but then added a lengthy series of

qualifications which, although none of them were greatly different from qualifications which any educated fundamentalist would add, changed the emphasis from what the fundamentalist emphasis would have been. Fundamentalists would emphasize the necessity of the doctrine of the verbal inspiration to a truly Biblical view; Grounds emphasized the reasonableness of the evangelical position when contrasted with a series of extreme and foolish opinions about the Bible. Evangelicals were not bibliolatrrous; they were not given to a crass literalism; they rejected the "dictation theory of inspiration"; they accepted other versions than the King James; they recognized the existence of errors having crept in through transcription over the centuries. Evangelicals welcomed "objective scholarship and research," and though they held to the doctrine of verbal inspiration, they held to it "humbly," recognizing that many problems remained unsolved.²⁹ Again, almost no educated fundamentalist would have had difficulty accepting any of the qualifications listed by Vernon Grounds, but the total package produced a different emphasis from that which they would have given. Fundamentalists felt, perhaps not without reason, that the irresponsible positions which Grounds had rejected were considered by him to be those of fundamentalists. In the years to come, the fundamentalists would regularly charge that their views were being criticized by false caricature by the new evangelicals, just as they always had been by the liberals.

The view presented on evolution reflected the influence which had been exerted by Bernard Ramm, Christian Life, and others, reserving the right "to be agnostic about broad extensions of the evolutionary concept." The closest he came to the question of evolution itself was to

suggest that some of the theories of science were "unwarranted extrapolations of scientific data."

While to those outside of evangelical orthodoxy, these concessions to intellectual sensitivity seem meager indeed, it must be remembered that they represent considerable "enlightenment" from a position which regards the last word on the subject of evolution to have been spoken by William Jennings Bryan, and that the specific nature of the "concessions" made was hardly as important as the existence of the desire to present orthodoxy in a form as little offensive to the "modern conscience" as possible. With the publication of this article by Vernon Grounds, the process of the division of evangelical orthodoxy into evangelicalism and fundamentalism came into the open. It seemed that battle lines were forming, and "Bible-believing Christians" would soon be called upon to make unpleasant, sometimes painful decisions.

NOTES

CHAPTER 7

¹Carl F. H. Henry, The Uneasy Conscience of Modern Fundamentalism (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1947), p. iii.

²National Association of Evangelicals, A Report of the Fourth Annual Convention (Chicago, 1946), pp. 43-45.

³Henry, Remaking the Modern Mind (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1946), p. 13.

⁴Edward John Carnell, Introduction to Christian Apologetics (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1948); Gordon H. Clark, A Christian View of Men and Things (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1952); Bernard Ramm, Problems in Christian Apologetics (Portland, Ore.: Western Baptist Theological Seminary, 1949); Bernard Ramm, Types of Apologetic Systems (Wheaton, Ill.: Van Kampen Press, 1953).

⁵Bernard Ramm, The Christian View of Science and Scripture (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1954).

⁶Eternity, August, 1955, p. 4.

⁷Christian Life, September, 1955, p. 46.

⁸Ibid.

⁹Eternity, August, 1955, p. 4.

¹⁰Joseph T. Bayly, "The Christian View of Science and Scripture: A Critical Review of Bernard Ramm's Book," Eternity, August, 1955, pp. 4-5, 44-47.

¹¹Ramm, Science and Scripture, p. 78.

¹²Ibid., pp. 41-42.

¹³Bayly, "Review of Ramm's Book," pp. 5, 44, 46.

¹⁴John R. Rice, "Shall We Appease Unbelieving Scholars?" Sword, June 24, 1955, XXI, 7.

¹⁵Bayly, "Review of Ramm's Book," p. 46.

¹⁶Eternity, October, 1955, p. 19.

¹⁷Rice, "Unbelieving Scholars?" p. 3.

¹⁸Eternity, October, 1955, pp. 34-35.

¹⁹Rice, "Unbelieving Scholars?" pp. 2-3, 7.

²⁰Eternity, October, 1955, pp. 18-19, 34.

²¹Christian Life, "Origin of the Universe," March, 1955; "Life and How It Began," September, 1955; "The Development of Life," January, 1956; "The Creation of Man," May, 1956.

²²Grounds, "The Nature of Evangelicalism," Eternity, February, 1956, pp. 12-13, 42-43.

²³Eternity, June, 1954, p. 13.

²⁴Grounds, "Nature of Evangelicalism," p. 12.

²⁵NAE, Report of Fourth Convention, p. 48.

²⁶Grounds, "Nature of Evangelicalism," p. 13.

²⁷Rice, "Unbelieving Scholars?" pp. 2-3, 7.

²⁸Grounds, "Nature of Evangelicalism," p. 13.

²⁹*Ibid.*, pp. 13, 42-43.

CHAPTER 8

"IS EVANGELICAL THEOLOGY CHANGING?"

One month after the appearance of Grounds' article in Eternity, another article, entitled "Is Evangelical Theology Changing?", printed in Christian Life demonstrated that the views presented by Grounds were representative of a considerable group of young evangelical scholars.¹ Written by Christian Life staff, the article featured prominently the views of faculty members from Fuller Seminary, Wheaton College and Asbury College. Grounds of Conservative Baptist Theological Seminary in Denver and Ramm of Baylor University were also quoted.

Christian Life set the stage by a brief look at "what fundamentalism was." The readers were told in one very short paragraph that fundamentalist was a label in the twenties for men who were involved in the defense of certain great doctrines of the faith such as "the inspiration of the Scriptures, the deity of Christ, the Virgin Birth, the Atonement, the Resurrection." The next two paragraphs are presented in full:

Then what started as a high-level theological discussion degenerated into a cat and dog fight. The Virgin Birth ran neck and neck with murder on the front pages of newspapers. Evolution was pitted against the Bible in the Scopes trial of 1925. Fundamentalism began to be a catch-all for the lunatic fringe: Holy Rollers, snake handlers, even Mormon polygamists were calling themselves fundamentalists.

That's why to the man on the street fundamentalism got to be a joke: As an ignorant, head-in-the-sand, contentious approach to the Christian faith, it seemed as out-dated as high-button shoes.²

There could here be no mistake; these "new evangelicals" were turning their backs on a heritage which to fundamentalists was no joke, no cat and dog fight. To the fundamentalists, the defense of the faith which had been made during the twenties was no cause for shame. Indeed, it was one of the most glorious hours of testimony, for in the face of such widespread departure from the faith there were still those willing to suffer the reproach of Christ and stand as witnesses against the apostasy of the day. Not that the apostasy could be halted or reversed; this was clearly precluded by premillennial eschatology, but the testimony was to be just that much brighter because of the overwhelming darkness around it. John R. Rice complained of "these young self-styled 'intellectuals,' sneering at the old-time defenders of the faith like W. B. Riley, Willian Jennings Bryan, Dr. H. A. Ironside, Dr. Harry Rimmer, etc."³ Dr. Alva J. McClain, president of Grace Theological Seminary, in an article published in The Brethren Missionary Herald, expressed the belief that the conclusion of the Christian Life editors that "the older fundamentalism was giving place to a new evangelicalism" was based on inadequate sampling, and he was critical of those who decried the belligerence of historic fundamentalism but spent "so much effort and time belaboring and fighting against their own side." McClain judged: "It looks sometimes as if they might have gotten lost in the dust of the real battle for the faith."⁴ Richard V. Clearwaters, then dean of Northwestern Seminary in Minneapolis, wrote an article "intended as an answer to the Christian Life article," which was published in the Sword in May, 1956. He made use of the Hegelian dialectic in suggesting that "the THESIS 'thrust' is

Fundamentalism and the ANTITHESIS 'counterthrust' is Liberalism and the new SYNTHESIS is the new evangelicalism--neither Fundamentalism nor Liberalism but rather a New Liberalism."⁵ Dr. William Culbertson, president of Moody Bible Institute, wrote an editorial for Moody Monthly which was strongly critical of the new evangelicalism. Moody had developed a very cautious approach in dealing with issues which were controversial among conservative evangelicals, and indeed this editorial mentioned no names, but it was clear that Culbertson felt the new direction was a dangerous one.

. . . there are times when we turn from one position to embrace another as though what we formerly held were altogether wrong and what we now espouse is altogether right. . . .

From certain sources in evangelical circles there have recently come quite caustic criticism of fundamentalism and fundamentalists. . . . We are not concerned about a healthy self-examination and a proper rectification. But we are concerned when the criticism is tantamount to a repudiation that is in danger of going to the opposite extreme.⁶

Were these new evangelicals engaging in self-criticism which would correct errors of emphasis in fundamentalism or were they, as Culbertson suggests, repudiating fundamentalism itself? Many fundamentalists thought that the latter was their intent, as it finally became the result.

After painting such an unfavorable picture of fundamentalism, Christian Life went on:

But all the while there was a solid core behind the garish shell. Even before World War II that core began to push out.

When the war was over, the crust split wide open. Out popped a younger generation. They agreed with their elders. But they thought there was more to Christianity than being on the defensive all the time. They wanted to build on the contributions of old leaders a positive, not a reactionary, movement.

.

... fundamentalism is still a protest against the mishmash liberal Protestantism makes of Christianity. It's still as concerned over preserving the Christian essentials as were the early fundamentalists.

But it is something more: a positive witness for God's redemptive love, wisdom and power as revealed in Jesus Christ.

In short, fundamentalism has become evangelicalism.

The fundamentalist watchword is "Ye should earnestly contend for the faith." The evangelical emphasis is "Ye must be born again."

That's the major change in conservative theological thought.

...7

Harold John Ockenga, the man who had first coined the term new evangelical in an address at Fuller Seminary nearly ten years before, would characterize the strategy of this new evangelicalism as "the positive proclamation of the truth in distinction from all errors without delving in personalities which embrace the error."⁸

Dr. Alva McClain found the "shift from contending for the faith to insistence upon the necessity of the new birth" the "worst thing about the entire article." He denied that there had been any lack of emphasis upon the need to be born again by the leaders of fundamentalism, either past or present. He suggested that comparison of the literature produced by fundamentalists and evangelicals would reveal much greater emphasis on the new birth in the work of the former. Nonetheless, the fundamentalists were not wrong "in giving first place to matters of Christian 'faith,'" for the new birth was dependent upon the "faith" which was preached. He deplored the shift from objective matters of Christian faith to matters of subjective experience which he saw in the new evangelicalism. Though the editors of Christian Life expressed concern over the divisions which had hampered the efforts of fundamentalism in the past, he feared that this new evangelicalism would produce a division which "will be the deepest and most disastrous of all."⁹

Certainly in this last observation he was not far from the mark.

Chester E. Tulga, long-time foe of modernism in the Northern Baptist Convention (American Baptist Convention), analyzed the new movement and presented what he considered its major weaknesses in an article published in the Sword titled "More Than Evangelicals." He saw "so-called evangelicalism" as a "diluted and infiltrated form of fundamentalism, lacking the positiveness of fundamentalism and the consistency of true evangelicalism." He charged that it "manifests its shoddiness in an ambitious intellectualism which craves recognition from liberal schools of thought instead of devoting itself to that purity of doctrine which our times need." He charged that evangelicalism was attempting to distinguish itself from the older fundamentalism, not because of any extremists who might have brought fundamentalism into disrepute--all groups have such extremists who make fools of themselves and embarrass their colleagues--but because modern evangelicalism was drifting to "a more compromising position." He charged the evangelicals with condemning fundamentalism through the use of caricature and pointed out that they were much more gentle with the liberals than they were with their fellow conservatives. He wrote that Vernon Grounds "handles liberalism very respectfully and objectively--no wisecracks, no sneers, no generalizations that reflect upon them in any way. Fundamentalism is handled in the opposite way. . . ." Tulga saw the differences between his own position and that of the new evangelicals as basic and not at all peripheral.

The "evangelicalism" which is being promoted in certain quarters (Christian Life magazine and Eternity magazine) is unlike the older fundamentalism not in its freedom from fools,

but in spirit and essence. There is a move to subtly change evangelicalism, to accommodate evangelicalism to the prevailing culture pattern, and to somehow obtain in liberal circles that recognition which some evangelical scholars crave. Evangelicalism, due to intellectual accommodation to modern thought, the compromises of societies and institutions who want to keep the contributions of ecclesiastical and theological mugwumps, the natural tendency of the human heart to compromise for its own advantage, is changing its essence.¹⁰

To many, it seemed that the differences between the older fundamentalism and this newer position would force a division, though some tried to de-emphasize the differences between the two groups. John Stoll, a professor at Cedarville College, was generally appreciative of the Christian Life article but complained that the distinction made between fundamentalist and evangelical was unwarranted.¹¹ Others suggested that the criticisms offered by these younger men were needed correctives, but did not warrant any new theological category. Most who felt this way remained silent, however, because most public comment of the development within conservative evangelicalism was beginning to stress the difference between the two sides to the advantage of one side or the other.

The shift from defense of the faith to positive proclamation having been established as the major distinction between the new position and the older fundamentalism, Christian Life went on to examine eight specific areas where differences were felt to exist:

1. A friendly attitude toward science.
2. A willingness to re-examine beliefs concerning the work of the Holy Spirit.
3. A more tolerant attitude toward varying views on eschatology.
4. A shift away from so-called extreme dispensationalism.
5. An increased emphasis on scholarship.
6. A more definite recognition of social responsibility.
7. A re-opening of the subject of biblical inspiration.
8. A growing willingness of evangelical theologians to converse with liberal theologians.¹²

The newer views in the area of the relation of the Bible to science have already been discussed, and here we only point out that the reaction of the fundamentalists was even stronger than it had been to Ramm's book. Richard Clearwaters asked:

Is it not strange that these teachers still like to worship at the shrine of science, which is "ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth" and yet the scientists in many instances disregard and even mock the Bible as a divine and exclusive revelation.¹³

John R. Rice, after raising doubts as to the validity of the carbon 14 dating method, asked: "Would it not be silly for Christian people to leave decisions about whether the Bible is correct on the matter of how old man is, and such matters, to the less than a dozen laboratories who decide such matters by the carbon 14 dating method?" He went on:

Why Christian people, evangelicals, on such light evidence, would be willing to make unnecessary and hurtful concessions about the accuracy of the Bible and the authority of the Bible, in favor of the guesses of a few scientists, is beyond me.

How often must we prove the scientists wrong in their infidelity? Again and again they retreated. They retreated from Darwinian evolution, because it was proved unscientific. They retreated from the silly talk about "the missing link." They do not even agree with each other. The proved scientific evidence about Mendel's law has now whipped the scientists off entirely from their doctrine of the persistence of acquired characteristics in heredity. Unbelieving and infidel scholars simply form their theories because they do not want to believe the Bible, not because scientific fact is against the Bible. Always, as more facts come to light, unbelieving scientists lose. The Bible is true, all of it, in science as in everything else.¹⁴

Change in the attitude of conservative evangelicals toward the pentecostalists had begun with their association in the National Association of Evangelicals. Their admission, against which Donald Grey Barnhouse as well as others had protested, led to a wider consideration of the particularities of that group on such questions as the place of tongues, faith healing, and the work of the Holy Spirit in the church.

Christian Life, in particular, wanted to develop interest in these areas, and Barnhouse, after his "conversion" in January of 1953, had cultivated relations with various pentecostal groups. The major impact of the charismatic movement comes after the time period with which this study is concerned, and certainly in 1956 it was a critical issue only to some individuals in some places.

Changes in the eschatological views of conservative evangelicals reflected the improved socio-economic standing of the group as a whole, and especially of the group of intellectuals which moved furthest from apocalyptic premillennialism. While too much can easily be made of the influence of social and economic condition on religious views, the link between an improved material situation and a lessening of apocalyptic enthusiasm seems too clear to deny. Many of the men seeking to move fundamentalism in a new direction had rejected the premillennialism which had been important in the origins of fundamentalism. Ernest R. Sandeen has placed much emphasis on eschatology in his recent work on the origins of fundamentalism, saying flatly that fundamentalism was the result of joining apocalyptic premillennialism and the Princeton theology.¹⁵ I would suggest that opposition to liberalism was equally determinative of the shape which fundamentalism assumed. Nonetheless, dispensational premillennialism was an important element in the theology of most of the early fundamentalists, and remained so in the theology of most fundamentalists in 1956, as indeed it remains so today.

While the details of the various possible eschatological positions are much too involved to be presented here, some understanding of the distinctions between premillennialism and other positions is necessary.

The basic tenet of premillennialism is that the return of Christ will precede a thousand-year reign on earth, during which righteousness and justice will be imposed. The element which most affects the subject of this study is the pessimistic view of the prospect of man in history which results. History is seen to be moving toward the setting up of the Anti-Christ as the ruler of the earth. The true church--made up of all who have been genuinely converted--would be taken from the earth by the supernatural act of God before the calamities of the last days would actually begin, but the "signs of the times" would be a warning to believers that the end time was near. Numerous specific prophecies concerning Israel would be fulfilled, the nations of the earth would be gathered into several great blocs, variously described, and the churches would be joined in a great organization. The nations and churches would be joined together in order that after the removal of the "true church" they might join in adulation of the Anti-Christ. Related to, but not identical with, premillennialism was dispensationalism. Dispensationalism was essentially the notion that God dealt with men in varying ways through different periods of history. The comment was often made by dispensationalists that any Christian who did not offer an animal on the sacrificial altar was in essence a dispensationalist. However, anti-dispensationalists insisted that the elaborate process of "dividing the word" in which some engaged was tantamount to adding the traditions of men. Another element of the prophetic picture was that most fundamentalists were pretribulationists. They taught that the rapture would occur before a time of great tribulation on earth, during which

God's wrath would be visited upon men, and during which the earth itself would undergo great convulsions.

The significance of the shift in eschatological thinking which was taking place was not explained in Christian Life, but the fact that such a shift was under way was emphasized. The writers' discussion began by recognizing that at one time most fundamentalists were pre-millennial and pretribulation, and pointed out that for the last ten years debate had raged on the subject. Some evangelicals were said to be teaching that there would be no millennial reign while others held that the true church would not escape the calamities of the end time (tribulation). It was noted that in some instances debate had been so heated that the faculties of seminaries had been divided, but then they commented that "among theologians," at least, the "free and open" spirit is winning out. They noted that the reaction had been favorable to two articles which their magazine had run during the last year in which two evangelicals, Harold John Ockenga and John Walvoord, had taken opposing sides on a question of eschatology, and that most comment had agreed that discussion of such a question was quite appropriate in an evangelical magazine committed to an inspired Bible. They then quoted with approval Paul Woolley of Westminster Theological Seminary: ". . . there is a more healthy open-mindedness about the details of the eschatological scheme."¹⁶

One of the most important elements in the new evangelical program was an increased emphasis on scholarship. It was not merely scholarship

which was called for, however; it was scholarship that would win acceptance in liberal and secular circles. Christian Life declared: "It's clear that evangelicals do not glory in ignorance. The evangelical scholar does not stab a finger at the Bible and say, 'This is it, take it or go to hell.'" Warren C. Young of Northern Baptist Theological Seminary was quoted: "The evangelical believes that his position can be supported and justified by a scholarly consideration of the case. He is the apologist for conservative Christianity." Christian Life claimed that the young evangelical could "get a well-rounded education at a good number of schools firmly committed to the teaching of God's Word." ¹⁷

The emphasis to be placed on the social responsibilities of Christianity was cited as another difference with the old fundamentalism. The significance of this element in the new evangelical program had early been chosen for special emphasis by Ockenga, who would soon declare: "The New Evangelicalism adheres to all the orthodox teachings of Fundamentalism but has evolved a social philosophy."¹⁸ Vernon Grounds was quoted as admitting "that a compelling ethic in terms of biblical categories has yet to be worked out. We must . . . make evangelicalism more relevant to the political and sociological realities of our times." And another evangelical warned: "Unless conservative Christian theologians take more time to point out the relevance of Christ and the Bible to important (social) issues conservatism will be neglected by the rising generation."¹⁹

The last two areas were those in which the greatest objections would be raised by fundamentalists. The question of the inspiration

of the Bible was considered by most conservative evangelicals to be settled and in no need of any "re-opening." The question of the relationships of the believer to non-evangelicals had long been a source of conflict within evangelical circles. As we have seen, it was a continual source of difficulty for the National Association of Evangelicals, and was a question on which no position acceptable to all could be constructed.

"Now just a pebble on the pond of conservative theology. It could expand to the bombshell of mid-century evangelicalism." Thus, the editors introduced this re-examination of the inspiration of Scripture. Evangelicals and fundamentalists both accepted the Bible as the "infallible, inspired Word of God," but the meaning of these terms was being brought under review. The by-now-standard disavowal of mechanical dictation was made, and the recognition of the possibilities of errors in translation or copying were duly registered. This much would have been admitted by the staunchest fundamentalist. There were, in fact, few real indications of change in this area. Carl Henry warned of a "weakening even in some conservative circles of confidence in the high doctrine of Scripture." Another evangelical was quoted: "Any type of verbal inspiration which fails to recognize the conceptual side will not carry much weight today."²⁰ The lack of anything very new in the discussion of inspiration indicates the extremely sensitive nature of the issue and the reluctance of even the "newest" evangelical to publicly commit himself to any alteration here.

The willingness of the new evangelicals to "converse" with liberal and non-evangelical theologians was the issue which finally brought

the division between evangelicals and fundamentalists, though apart from the other differences some accommodation on this point could probably have been arranged. Vernon Grounds was quoted: "An evangelical can be organizationally separated from all Christ-denying fellowship and yet profitably engage in an exchange of ideas with men who are not evangelicals. Why not? How else can we bring them into an experience with the Christ Who is Truth incarnate?" And Lloyd Kalland of Gordon Divinity School stated: "Evangelical scholars are more willing to be drawn into open conflict with the liberals than at any other time in recent history." Of all the sections of the article, this was the least candid. The type of new apologetic approach to the denominations which was being called for was not described, and readers were left to draw their own conclusions. That fundamentalists had been in open conflict with liberalism was one of the points on which the new evangelicals criticized them. The new approach to "conversations" with liberals must be understood in the context of the Billy Graham evangelistic crusades and their dependence on the cooperation of non-evangelical spokesmen. As long as conservative evangelicalism operated in relative isolation, and was generally ignored by the denominations and church councils, differences of opinion on the subject of the believer's relationships outside the "authorized" circle could be kept under control. Only an occasional dispute between Carl McIntire and some other individual or agency of evangelicalism would bring attention to this issue. With the emergence of Billy Graham and the support of his ministry by those outside the evangelical group, the questions of separation and fellowship again were raised and had to be faced.

The fundamentalist reaction to the Christian Life article left little doubt that here was the beginning of two movements, where before one had stood. The tone of the replies indicated considerable escalation since the publication of The Christian View of Science and Scripture. The meaning of Vernon Grounds' article of February had been discerned, and fundamentalist leaders knew that the controversy which had been confined to the classrooms of evangelical seminaries and colleges and the pulpits of individual churches would now be fought in the pages of the evangelical press. While Carl McIntire, Robert Ketcham, and other leaders of the American Council of Christian Churches had long condemned the activities of those not committed to the total fundamentalist interpretation, the dispute over this new evangelicalism would push independent fundamentalist leadership much closer to the McIntire position. While many evangelical leaders had earlier been able to work with men such as John R. Rice and Bob Jones, the dispute over this new evangelicalism would, in the minds of many evangelicals, place Rice and Jones in the same camp with McIntire. The repudiation of fundamentalism by the new evangelicals, in time, was matched by fundamentalist withdrawal from all except explicitly fundamentalist organizations.

One fundamentalist pastor wrote in Christian Life:

Fundamentalism is not out-dated, defensive only or a joke. No one can be a real believer and not be a fundamentalist. It seems, too, that it is time to discontinue the terms conservative and liberal and use the more biblical terms believers and unbelievers.

This newborn evangelicalism, so called, is nothing more or less than a drift away from the Word of God into unbelief. It is led by many "small" men, would-be scholars with big words and fancy phrases, ever ready to bow to the "science" idol, men of knowledge but little spiritual understanding, men of books, but not "The Book."²¹

Other fundamentalist comment often reflected this same resentment, and often in very strong terms. Often pointed out was the lack of standing, in fundamentalist eyes, of the scholars who were the source of the new views. As John R. Rice saw the leadership of the new movement,

It represents a new generation, untried, largely unrecognized in their own denominations, not yet proven leaders in Christian life and work and soul winning, yet hoping to be; a left-wing fringe, influenced by neo-orthodoxy, and trying so hard to be popular with liberals as well as conservatives. They try to gain favor by criticizing fundamentalists.²²

Dr. Richard Clearwaters' lengthy article in rebuttal to "Is Evangelical Theology Changing?" was entitled "The Bible; The Unchanging Evangelical Volume." He found the central weakness in the new position to be its foundation in human experience: "Ye must be born again," rather than in a strict adherence to a body of doctrine. Those familiar with statements of faith drawn up by evangelical agencies might well complain that in all cases a rather comprehensive body of doctrine was outlined. Nonetheless, Clearwaters had addressed a very real point. Increasingly, evangelicals would define their basis of fellowship in terms of a heart experience rather than acceptance of a body of doctrine. Barnhouse had already loudly declared that heart response and not adherence to received doctrine was to determine the circle of fellowship. Clearwaters linked this foundation in human experience with criticism of the new movement as "pietistic." He singled out three unfortunate characteristics of this pietism: its basis in human experience, its depreciation of doctrinal difference, and its depreciation of outward ecclesiastical arrangements. He suggested a kinship between the new evangelical reliance upon human experience and the reliance of

neo-orthodoxy in existential experience. He denied any novelty to the new evangelical "friendly attitude toward science" and pointed to a long line of evangelical Christians who were at the same time front-rank scientists. He offered the familiar fundamentalist distinction between science and "pseudo-science." The latter was generally reserved for the elements of the scientific community which put forth views concerning the origins of the universe, man, or life which conflicted with their interpretation of the Genesis account. The call of the new evangelicals for more scholarship in defense of the faith was seen as unworthy intellectualism. Clearwaters pictured the attitude of the apostle Paul at length, quoting numerous scriptures which suggested Paul's lack of confidence in the wisdom of man and his utter dependence on the message given him by God. He concluded: "The Apostle Paul, the fundamentalist, was no mind-worshipper; he realized that his legs were not long enough to straddle the chasm between Reason and Revelation! . . . Through the ages the revealed Gospel of faith has been an offense to the pride of the carnal minds of reason." He quoted Dr. W. B. Riley in opposition to the claim that the new evangelicals had a more developed social conscience than the fundamentalists. Riley had complained when Carl Henry years before had criticized fundamentalism for its social omissions. In a long recitation of the kinds of social service performed mainly by evangelicals, Riley insisted that there was no reason for his colleagues' admission that fundamentalists lagged behind liberal churchmen in that area. Finally, Clearwaters commented on the new openness toward non-evangelical theologians:

The founding fathers of Fundamentalism, . . . were not only willing to "converse" with the unbelieving liberal theologians, but were willing to "work" with them; to "serve" with them; and to give them their proportion of time and number on denominational programs and panels. Those early Fundamentalists learned what has yet to be learned by the teachers of the New Evangelicalism; namely, that they could not continue steadfastly in the apostles' doctrines, and in fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers with those who rejected the "apostles' doctrine."²³

A strong letter to Christian Life from Bob Jones, founder of Bob Jones University, hit many of the same features of the new evangelicalism. He declared that the "old-time orthodox crowd will never win by compromise or by a soft attitude toward neo-orthodoxy." He charged that many fundamentalists had become mind-worshippers, and again claimed the apostle Paul for support against an over-ambitious intellectualism. He reported that in fifty years of ministry he had "never really met a man who was brought to the Lord Jesus Christ by what the world calls an intellectual approach. . . ."²⁴

Dr. Alva McClain insisted that "the central controversy of fundamentalism has never been a mere cat and dog fight," and he asked: "Do the editors of Christian Life think that the great fundamental truths of Christianity are no longer under serious attack: . . . ?" As to the new willingness of evangelicals to converse with liberal theologians, McClain warned that "hobnobbing too closely with the enemy has always cost the cause of Christianity much more than it ever gained. . . . You do not find the Apostle Paul suggesting an 'exchange of ideas' with Hymenaeus and Alexander. . . . Modern blasphemy is no less reprehensible than it was in ancient days."²⁵

Chester Tulga attempted a somewhat deeper analysis of the origins of the new movement than other fundamentalists and found its roots in the experience of the younger group of scholars who did not live in

the days of the denominational struggles but who inherited the fundamentalist position. He noted that movements are invariably shaped by their association with what they oppose, and saw fundamentalism "forced to live and think in an atmosphere dominated by theological liberalism which was infected by secular culture." While keeping the form of fundamentalism, the young scholars were "deeply influenced by the books they studied and the teachers they admired. The passing of time heals old wounds, but also weakens old convictions." This decadent fundamentalism was the result of the "impact of science, philosophy and neo-orthodoxy on evangelicalism, plus the always present reluctance of the human heart to take the narrow way." Tulga challenged the new evangelical softening of the basis of fellowship. He asserted that before the rise of modernism there was a body of truth which was to be preserved and proclaimed and was also the ground of fellowship. Since the coming of modernism, religious experience has been substituted for adherence to received doctrine as the basis of fellowship, and now, he charged, evangelicals are accepting this substitution. He cited a Watchman-Examiner editorial of 1951 which argued that modernists were Christians rather than unbelievers, and declared:

• • . . . the new birth is interpreted so loosely and so broadly in our time that it has come to mean almost any kind of religious experience. . . . modernists do not believe in the God of the Old and New Testaments even if they do use the word, but a remodeled God who suits them better. They do not believe in the Christ of the New Testament but the Christ who has been reconstructed by historical scholarship. . . . Evangelicalism, shifting from truth to experience as a basis of fellowship, will not long be loyal to the truth.

Tulga ended his discussion of the new evangelicalism with a series of questions which accurately summarized the concerns which had been expressed by all the fundamentalist spokesmen, and gave these questions the heading "Which way evangelicalism?"

Are evangelical scholars trying to accommodate evangelicalism to science, philosophy and neo-orthodoxy, as the early modernists accommodated orthodoxy to evolution, higher criticism and scientific method?

Are evangelical scholars too concerned about winning respect of liberal scholars? Are evangelical scholars willing to blur the sharp lines of truth in the interest of intellectual fraternity?

Are evangelical scholars in danger of creating a new synthesis of evangelical truths with liberal and neo-orthodox "insights" more philosophical than biblical?

Are evangelical scholars seeking to clarify evangelicalism in the light of the Word of God, or seeking a new synthesis to replace the present antithesis of liberalism and evangelicalism?

Are evangelicals subjecting fundamentalism to criticism by caricature, rather than objective analysis to get rid of the label dreaded by every intellectualist, the label of obscurantist? Are scholars more afraid of sinning against the cultural pattern of their day than sinning against God?²⁶

Tulga thought he knew the answers to these questions, but the fact that he yet used the form of question indicates the reluctance with which a further division of conservative evangelicalism was faced. Neither side wanted the division. Vernon Grounds declared the future to be bright for the evangelical cause if it could counteract its "fissiparous tendencies."²⁷ But neither side could accept any compromise of its essential position. The fundamentalists saw the changes proposed by the new evangelicals in the context of the battles of the early days of the century, and saw in the changes the destructive forces which had years before moved them out of the Protestant mainstream. The evangelicals felt that it was a new day in which an offensive should be pressed to restore evangelicalism to its rightful place in the Protestant establishment, but that any success in the effort would depend on the readiness of evangelicalism to avoid the offense which had become associated with fundamentalism. Stated Paul Woolley:

Conservative Christianity is faced with a decision. It can stick to a lot of unnecessary traditional baggage in the forms of customs, practices and lingo beloved through the generations but now obstacles to preaching the Gospel to the unsaved. Or it can recognize that it has the opportunity to state the truths of the Christian faith in new terms and by new methods.²⁸

A point of decision had indeed been reached, and during the next two years the division would take place. The issue which would force decision was the ecumenical evangelism practiced by Billy Graham. In the spring of 1956, he was claimed by both the new evangelicals and the fundamentalists. Richard Clearwaters was critical of Christian Life for associating Graham with these new evangelicals, and declared that "there is not any of the eight points listed above that has any significance whatever in his Gospel."²⁹ Graham had been criticized by Carl McIntire and some other fundamentalists but had been defended by Rice, and most fundamentalist leaders still saw him as a defender of fundamentalism. Christian Life, more accurately, claimed Billy Graham as the foremost spokesman for the new position. In the months ahead, Graham and the ecumenical evangelism which he practiced so successfully would become the dividing line between fundamentalist and evangelical.

NOTES
CHAPTER 8

¹"Is Evangelical Theology Changing?" Christian Life, March, 1956, pp. 16-19.

²"Evangelical Theology," p. 16.

³Sword, May 4, 1956, XX, 2.

⁴Alva J. McClain, "Is Theology Changing in the Conservative Camp?" Brethren Missionary Herald, February 23, 1957, pp. 123-124.

⁵Richard V. Clearwaters, "The Bible: The Unchanging Evangelical Volume," Sword, May 4, 1956, XX, 1-2, 5-7.

⁶William Culbertson, "The Swing of the Pendulum," Sword, May 25, 1956, XX, 5.

⁷"Evangelical Theology," pp. 16-17.

⁸William E. Ashbrook, Evangelicalism: The New Neutralism (Columbus, Ohio: printed privately by Calvary Bible Church, 1970 ed.), p. 5.

⁹McClain, "Is Theology Changing?" p. 12.

¹⁰Chester E. Tulga, "More Than Evangelicals," Sword, July 27, 1956, XX, 1, 3-5.

¹¹Christian Life, May, 1956, pp. 3-4.

¹²"Evangelical Theology," pp. 17-19.

¹³Clearwaters, "The Bible," p. 1.

¹⁴Rice, "Our Beloved 'Intellectuals' Again," Sword, May 18, 1956, XX, 1, 12.

¹⁵Ernest R. Sandeen, The Roots of Fundamentalism: British and American Millenarianism, 1800-1930 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970).

¹⁶"Evangelical Theology," p. 18.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 18.

¹⁸Ashbrook, Evangelicalism, p. 4.

¹⁹"Evangelical Theology," p. 18.

²⁰Ibid., pp. 18-19.

²¹Christian Life, May, 1956, p. 4.

²²Sword, May 4, 1956, XX, 2.

²³Clearwaters, "The Bible," pp. 1-2, 5-7.

²⁴Christian Life, June, 1956, p. 4.

²⁵McClain, "Is Theology Changing?" pp. 123-124.

²⁶Tulga, "More Than Evangelicals," pp. 1, 3, 4, 5.

²⁷"Evangelical Theology," p. 19.

²⁸Ibid., p. 20.

²⁹Clearwaters, "The Bible," p. 5.

CHAPTER 9

THE TURNING POINT: APRIL, 1956

Some fundamentalists had for many years been critical of Billy Graham's insistence that churches of all stripes be invited to participate in his evangelistic campaigns. Carl McIntire, through the Christian Beacon, had voiced such criticisms from time to time. Other fundamentalists had broken with Graham after his Union Seminary address. Dr. Monroe Parker reports that he rode the Billy Graham bandwagon until he heard the message preached at Union Seminary in which Graham "threw bricks at the Fundamentalists and roses at the Modernists."¹ In December of 1955 Dr. Bob Jones preached a message in chapel at Bob Jones University which voiced strong objections to the policy of ecumenical evangelism which Graham had developed, but which made no mention of him directly. Jones declared that he had never "conducted any campaign under the sponsorship of any ministerial association if I knew there was a modernist in that association."² Still, most fundamentalists continued to support Billy Graham into 1956. Strong criticism had begun to be directed at Graham from non-orthodox sources, and Rice rushed to the defense of revivalism as he had done so often in the past. Nothing would retain fundamentalist support for Graham more than the attacks of the modernists, for their attacks were evidence that the distinction between Graham's ministry and that of the modernists was being maintained. As the preliminary preparations for the New York campaign, which would take place in 1957, began to be made in early 1956, several liberal

spokesmen attacked Graham in attempts to warn their colleagues of the dangers involved in supporting "fundamentalist" evangelism. The Christian Century was strong in its criticism of the coming New York crusade, as were other liberal spokesmen.

Rice responded to the liberal criticism of Graham in the February 3 issue.³ Rice first remarked that if there were not modernist criticism of Graham, "something would be wrong with his ministry." He then went on to build a picture of solid modernist opposition to Graham. He went back to quote a liberal critic of the 1954 London campaign, who had said that Graham's theology was "forty years out of date." He reported the efforts a Scottish churchman had made to prevent Graham's crusade in that country and quoted him: "The fundamentalism of Dr. Graham ill-accords with the work the Church has done these fifty years in relationship with science. His social escapism hardly gears into the real pressures of our world while his authoritarian methods have their counterpart in a wrong trend in our social future." A Christian Century editorial attacking the coming New York campaign, "New York Eggs All In One Basket," was quoted extensively.⁴ A caustic Christian Century review of Graham's recently published Peace With God was also mentioned.⁵ Rice saw the attacks of the modernists as a "good sign." "They prove, first, that Billy Graham has not trimmed his gospel message at all. They prove, second, that Billy Graham is getting it over, and that modernists find themselves losing everywhere crowds hear the historic Christian Gospel from the lips of this Spirit-filled young evangelist." Rice then went on to quote, almost in its entirety, a newspaper article which had been strongly

critical of Graham. The theology of Graham was said to be "at least 50 years behind that of contemporary scholarship." The writer of the article had contacted forty-three converts of a Graham meeting and claimed that these converts revealed the lack of constructive results by the great revivalist rallies. Eighteen of the forty-three were already church members and thus were discounted. Of the remaining twenty-five, none was a "true outsider." "Most were impressionable adolescents, already attached to some church." Only one of these had actually joined a church in the time since the campaign. Rice found the article "rather foolish" and challenged both the author and his conclusions. He charged that the forty-three converts investigated were "names turned over to some modernist church, who allowed this other modernist to check them." Forty-three had some original connection with the church, but only one actually joined that church after the campaign. From this, Rice concluded:

Evidently the instructions which Dr. Billy Graham and his team give the converts in the counselling room that they should "get in a Bible-believing, Bible preaching church" was taken to heart by many. Others, obviously the best converts, did not return to this church where the Gospel was not preached. Only one went against the Billy Graham counsel and joined this church, and that one ceased attending, evidently disappointed that the church did not preach the historic Christian Gospel, the old-time religion preached by Billy Graham.⁶

No doubt Rice credited influence to the instructions given the new converts far beyond their real significance, but his comments here show his determination to see Graham as part of the fundamentalist war against modernism. Even more revealing was the heading which he gave the next section of his discussion: "The Critic, as an Unbelieving Modernist, Opposes Bible-Believing Billy Graham." Rice charged:

This modernist would have Dr. Billy Graham preach the ideas of Barth and Brunner, the ideas of Nels Ferre and Elton Trueblood and Bishop Oxnham. He would have Dr. Billy Graham preach the criticisms and doubts of Georgia Harkness and George Buttrick. And all these have left the historic Christian faith and the infallible Bible that Billy Graham preaches, the blood atonement which he cherishes, the simple plan of salvation that he makes clear in every sermon, the Hell of which he warns people. The preaching of the Christ who is God incarnate is called "a theology which is at least 50 years behind that of contemporary scholarship."⁷

One month later Rice reported on an attack by an archbishop of the Church of England on Graham and fundamentalism. Archbishop Ramsey had written an article, "The Menace of Fundamentalism," which had been widely circulated.⁸ Rice quoted extensively from Ramsey and then commented, "Our first reaction is to thank God for the faithfulness of Dr. Billy Graham." Making explicit his view of the relationship between the fundamentalist perspective on Graham and the modernist attacks, Rice observed: "The Archbishop doesn't like Billy Graham's theology that 'Christ bore your punishment; believe and be saved.' Thank God for the faithfulness of Dr. Billy Graham to the old-time Christian faith. Let his critics please take note."⁹ Here Rice pointed fundamentalist critics of Graham to the negative witness of the modernist. The high point of Rice's campaign to join Graham to the fight against modernism came in the following month, April of 1956.

In an important article entitled "Modern Critics Beset Fundamentalist Billy Graham," Rice made a last effort to force an interpretation on the situation which would be acceptable, even satisfying, to the fundamentalist mind.¹⁰ Rice again recounted the liberal opposition which Graham had faced in London, Scotland, and at home, quoting again passages in which the modernists attack Graham. He then reported the

publication of a small booklet by The Times of London containing letters to the editor, opposing and supporting the appearance which Graham had made at Cambridge University.¹¹ Rice quoted from several letters and then commented:

We wish we could quote the entire 17 letters. All of them show that the issue was clearly drawn. Dr. Billy Graham is a fundamentalist. He believes the Bible is true. He believes that the blood of Jesus Christ is the only hope of a sinner. He preaches the historic Christian Gospel in plainness and power without wavering. And it is the historic Christian Gospel which modernists hate. They hated it in England. They hated it in Scotland. They hate it in New York.¹²

He went on to report criticisms of the New York crusade which had been made by Reinhold Niebuhr and John C. Bennett, making appropriate rejoinders. Finally, Rice made one last comment which revealed the frustrations which he faced in dealing with the new situation:

We believe that the fight of the modernists against Billy Graham and his fundamental stand for the truth will clear the air everywhere. It is reassuring to know that even the most violent unbelievers recognize Billy Graham as an out-and-out Bible believer and Bible preacher of this historic Christian Gospel. And let all of us pray for him and rejoice in his blessed Spirit-filled ministry.¹³

Rice had done his best. He had expended every effort to place a construction on events which would correspond to the battle which fundamentalists wished to fight, and felt they were called of God to fight. He had for years apologized to his fellow fundamentalists for the errors of the young evangelist. He had pleaded the youth and inexperience of Graham as an excuse for his harsh words against fundamentalism. He had pointed to the harsh criticism of Graham by certain of the fundamentalists as provocation. He had here painted a picture which represented the classic fundamentalist interpretation of religious struggle in the modern time and in fact for all time. He had placed

each player in his appointed role. The heading of the conclusion of this last article read, "Again It Is Modernist Versus Fundamentalist, Believer Versus Unbeliever." His deep concern for mass revivalism had helped him to resist the inclination, always strong in a fundamentalist, to break with Graham because of differences he considered important. Now, in the spring of 1956 he hoped that the attack of the modernists on Graham would "clear the air" and relieve the tension which was building inside the conservative camp. He had set the stage, but the players refused their proper roles.

Rice had presented a false analysis, because he had misread past events. Liberal critics had indeed spoken out against Graham in London and had criticized his fundamental theology, but in London, Graham had enjoyed wider church support than he had ever received before. Much of this support, perhaps most of it, came from decidedly non-evangelical churchmen. One liberal critic had tried to prevent Graham's coming to Scotland and had spoken against him when he was there, but he had not prevented the crusade, and the Church of Scotland had given strong support to the crusade, despite the fact that there was little evangelical strength in it. The Christian Century regularly attacked Graham, but as journalists rather than working churchmen, their interests always tended to be more ideological than those of ministering pastors or even denominational leaders. Pastors and denominational spokesmen were supporting the crusades in greater numbers all the time, whatever their theological views. The great New York campaign would in fact demonstrate conclusively that the great majority of Protestant clergymen, however much they might disagree with his theology, would participate

in the giant rallies. Graham would of course have to forego any but the mildest mention of false doctrine, and the non-orthodox ministers would certainly insist on fair representation on the committees of the campaigns, and on a reasonable share of the inquiry cards, but these accommodations would be made, and the outcome would be far from that which Rice had wished. In the end the decision which Rice, Jones, and other fundamentalists would make was that which McIntire had made long before.

Many circumstances led to the final break, but one which was important, particularly with Rice, had to do with the Southern Baptist Convention. In the thirties Rice had, with J. Frank Norris, been bitterly critical of non-orthodox teaching within Southern Baptist circles, particularly in the colleges and seminaries supported by the convention. After his break with Norris in 1936, Rice's relations with the convention began to warm. He had always had many friends within the convention and had always done considerable preaching in Southern Baptist churches. The sermons of Southern Baptist preachers such as Robert G. Lee, W. A. Criswell, and past leaders such as George Truett and Lee R. Scarborough often appeared in the pages of the Sword. The high point of the warming of relations with the convention came in the spring of 1950. An issue was dedicated to Southern Baptists, and Rice declared that he honored them because they were the "most evangelistic of all the larger denominations." He observed that "modernism has made little headway among Southern Baptists, for which we devoutly thank God, though we know there is some infection and a great need for vigilance and prayer."¹⁴ During the early fifties, new signs of conflict

appeared, and Rice was again often critical of Southern Baptist activities. Since that time he has moved steadily away from the convention, and today his activities are usually carried on in independent Baptist or other fundamentalist circles. Disputes over teaching considered by the fundamentalists unacceptable and over administrative policies in the Southern Baptist schools relating to such activities as dancing and drinking of alcoholic beverages prompted many of the controversies in the early fifties. Fundamentalist Southern Baptists responded by eliminating their contributions to the Cooperative Program, the channel through which the convention's major activities are financed. Denominational spokesmen began to place great emphasis on support of the program as an element of Southern Baptist life, and this further generated conflict. An aggressive, fundamentalist church and one of the largest Southern Baptist churches in the country was the Highland Park Baptist Church of Chattanooga, Tennessee. Pastored by Dr. Lee Roberson, this church had built a complex of schools under the name Tennessee Temple Schools, which included a liberal arts college, a bible school, a seminary, and an elementary school. The schools had been built somewhat on the pattern of the old Northwestern Schools built by Dr. W. B. Riley in Minneapolis. On December 13, 1954, the local Southern Baptist ministers' association issued a statement strongly critical of the work of Highland Park Baptist Church and of Tennessee Temple Schools. The attack on the schools had been carefully planned and was quickly published in Southern Baptist papers throughout the country. Rice responded with a long article detailing the virtues of the church and its pastor and condemning the actions of the denomination.¹⁵

Typical was the following Rice comment: "This kind of an event will separate the men from the boys. It will separate the men of genuine conviction from the kowtowing, toekissing 'yes' men." He reported that with 12,000 members, Highland Park was one of the largest churches in the world. During the twelve years of Dr. Roberson's pastorate, over 9,000 people had been baptized into the fellowship of the church, while 6,000 others had been baptized but had joined other churches. The church was said to be an evangelistic, missionary Baptist church with 40 percent of its income going for missions, but the contribution to the Cooperative Program had remained what it had been when Roberson came to the church, approximately \$3,600 per year. As the denominational leaders began to move against what they saw as abrasive and too independent fundamentalists, relations became even more strained. In April, Rice repeated advice that he had long given to Southern Baptist churches, that they should designate all their contributions to specific activities and give nothing through the Cooperative Program.¹⁶ Thus funds would be kept from activities deemed unworthy of Southern Baptist support. Rice accused those who supported denominational activities despite the modernism of denominational leaders of being guilty of "denominational idolatry." In the next months the pages of the Sword contained numerous letters taking various positions in the controversy, as a considerable portion of its readership were Southern Baptists. On March 30, 1955, the Highland Park Baptist Church voted itself out of the local Southern Baptist association, pending the granting of an apology from that organization. It was said that the relationship of the church to the total Southern Baptist Convention

had not been decided, but "waits upon events." In April of the following year, a group of fundamentalist Baptist pastors met in Chattanooga to organize the Southern Baptist Fellowship. Led by Roberson and Dr. Harold Sightler, pastor of the Tabernacle Baptist Church, of Greenville, South Carolina, the largest church in that state, the organization was composed of Southern Baptist, World Baptist, Conservative Baptist, and Baptist Bible churches, as well as independent Baptist churches. A similar organization in the Northern Baptist Convention had years before led to the Conservative Baptist Association, a group made up primarily of churches which withdrew from the Northern Baptist Convention. Sightler had withdrawn from the Southern Baptist Convention when its local spokesmen disagreed with him about the need for a Baptist church in the location where he built the Tabernacle Baptist Church. Roberson was not yet out of the convention but was well on his way. Though the organization was called only for "fellowship and mutual encouragement," it seemed that a new denomination might in time emerge out of this group. The issue which would actually be the occasion of the break between Graham and Rice would arise out of the internal Southern Baptist difficulties.

April, 1956 was the turning point as far as Rice is concerned. After this, his energies were more and more concentrated on matters which would push him away from Graham. The debates over Bernard Ramm's book had occurred the year before. The Christian Life articles had further pointed the way toward a new evangelical position on evolution. In February the Eternity article by Vernon Grounds had been published, and in March had come the full revelation of the new evangelical

philosophy in the Christian Life article, "Is Evangelical Theology Changing?" The discussion which took place during the spring and summer of 1956, related in Chapters 7 and 8 of this study, revealed the distance between the fundamentalists and the new evangelicals. Rice had developed the picture of Billy Graham as the fundamentalist champion against the forces of modernism, while the new evangelicals claimed Graham as a leading spokesman of the effort to reform fundamental evangelicalism. Graham soon made it clear that he stood completely with the new evangelicals, as indeed he always had. The principles of the program of ecumenical evangelism which he had developed were exactly those of the new evangelicalism. At least since the London crusade, Graham had moved consistently toward a position of greater accommodation with the established churches and less reliance on the specifically evangelical minority. He had come to realize in the preparations for New York that the non-orthodox church leadership would have to be brought fully into the campaign. He certainly knew that this would cost him the support of the fundamentalists. By the summer of 1956 he was prepared to accept that fact. The long bickering with certain fundamentalists, such as McIntire, and some leaders among the Conservative Baptists had undoubtedly taken their toll. The confidence which he gained, especially from London and Scotland, and from the effect of repetitive success made him more independent. And certainly long before he had recognized how really unimportant, statistically, the handful of fundamentalists were, compared to the masses with which he was then dealing. Finally, the winds of reform were blowing strongly in the conservative camp, and Graham as well as other reform leaders knew that

change could come only after the influence of the men who had guided conservative evangelicalism since the days of the denominational struggles was broken. Outspoken fundamentalists like Jones, Rice, and McIntire would have to be bypassed; and the men who guided most conservative religious institutions would have to be pushed into the program which the new evangelicals believed would put orthodoxy back into a place of honor in American theological discussion. Graham would no longer try to keep the hard-line fundamentalist support. A clean break with fundamentalism would be necessary.

In April, 1956, a letter signed by Graham appeared in the Baptist Standard, the Southern Baptist denominational paper for Texas. The controversy over the Cooperative Program had prompted the editor of the paper to contact Graham. As the world's leading evangelist, as a Southern Baptist, and as a member of the co-operating board of the Sword of the Lord, one of the most vocal parties to the dispute, Graham's views would have great influence. Graham asserted his complete loyalty to the convention and the Cooperative Program. Graham wrote: "Concerning the Cooperative Program, I believe it is the greatest means ever devised by the church for giving one's tithe. . . . In private and public conversation I support the Cooperative Program without hesitation." He added:

For those who are looking for the perfect church, they will never find one on earth and if they did find one, it would be imperfect the moment they joined it! Jesus taught that the wheat and the tares would grow together until the end of time. . . . We have a lot of people within and without the church who continually try to do God's work for Him by separating the tares and the wheat. I'm certain there are always areas within our denomination that we can improve. This is also true in the Co-operative Program.¹⁷

Graham had repudiated the position of the fundamentalists with regard to the specific question of dealing with modernism in the Southern Baptist Convention program and had repudiated even more by his position of the "wheat and the tares." In language understood by the public to mean one thing and by conservative evangelicals to mean something entirely different, Graham had denied that the church held any corporate responsibility to preserve its theological integrity. Wheat and tares to most evangelical Christians meant all those who made a profession of faith and who were on that basis received into the fellowship of the believers. In the context in which Graham had used it, tares referred to those within the leadership of the churches who preached doctrines at variance with the fundamentals of the faith. That is what the disturbance in the convention was about, and Graham was completely aware of the implications of his words. In the years to come, such an interpretation of his meaning would be borne out many times over. Graham had refused to be associated with any fundamentalist holy war against unbelief and further had been sharply critical of the efforts of those who waged that war. It was clear that Rice's picture of Graham as the fundamentalist champion in a battle against modernism was one wholly of his own making, having little relation to the actual situation. Rice, of course, immediately recognized the significance of the letter and contacted Graham, asking him to renew his endorsement of the statement of faith which had appeared at the top of the front page of the Sword for so many years. The statement reads:

An Independent Christian Weekly, Standing for the Verbal Inspiration of the Bible, the Deity of Christ, His Blood Atonement, Salvation by Faith, New Testament Soul Winning and the Premillennial Return of Christ. Opposes Modernism, Worldliness and Formalism.

Graham declined to make any such renewal and asked that his name be dropped from the list of members of the co-operating board of the Sword of the Lord.¹⁸ Graham was removed from the list, though no public mention of the fact was made at that time. The decision had been made. Graham had severed his last tie with separatist fundamentalism. He had come to the conclusion that any identification with these controversialists would be a definite hindrance as he tried to widen his support within the denominations. The event was far more than a personal split between Rice and Graham. In the days to come, Graham would emerge as the chief public spokesman of the new evangelicalism, and the division of conservative evangelicalism would follow.

During the spring and summer, controversy raged within the conservative circles over public efforts being made by the new evangelicals to make significant changes in the evangelical program. The bitterness of these discussions was indicated in Chapter 8. As long as the new evangelical position was promoted primarily by young scholars such as Henry, Carnell, and Ramm and by Barnhouse, whose influence was weak beyond the circle of his personal following, the dispute between the fundamentalists and this new group could be considered by the majority of conservatives as a relatively minor matter upon which they would not be forced to take a position. As Graham became the spokesman for the new position and the controversy came more and more to center upon his program of ecumenical evangelism, decision would be forced upon all, and it would become increasingly difficult to remain out of the controversy.

The appearance of Christianity Today in October of 1956 marked a new stage in the controversy. The new magazine was founded by

Dr. L. Nelson Bell, father-in-law of Billy Graham, and from the beginning it was recognized that its pages would reflect the convictions of the evangelist. Graham had given \$10,000 to the work and had raised much additional support for its activities. The magazine would be a consistent promoter and defender of ecumenical evangelism. Dr. Carl F. H. Henry, of Fuller Theological Seminary, a leading new evangelical author, was chosen as editor. Henry represented the more cautious edge of the new evangelical movement; he would feel it necessary to warn his fellows from time to time of the dangers they approached in the boldness of some of their assertions. One of the first tasks of Christianity Today was to define the new position in a way which would as little as possible offend those who were hesitant to leave the old ways and yet would be sufficiently flexible to gain the respect of those outside the evangelical circle. In doing so, the magazine invariably presented its position as an attractive middle course, true to the historic faith but scorning the abrasive isolationism of the extreme fundamentalists and of course rejecting as error the varieties of non-orthodoxy. The editors were not hesitant to declare, "The doctrinal content of historic Christianity will be presented and defended." They took a firm position on the inspiration of the Bible, accepting the "complete reliability and authority of the written Word of God" and holding that the Scriptures "teach the doctrine of plenary inspiration."¹⁹

A major concern of Christianity Today would be to examine the relationship of orthodoxy to neo-orthodoxy in the context of modern theological discussion. The usual results of their examination would

be to find reason for deep gratitude to Barthianism for unseating classical liberalism and then, weakly or strongly, to point to differences with the dialectical theologians on the inspiration of the Bible and sometimes on the atonement. In the first issue the editors sought to properly relate Graham and Barth. They suggested:

However varied their talents and influences, both Barth and Graham have come to symbolize a religious springtime after the long, cold winter of Liberalism. They stand as giants of our generation protesting against the liberal reduction of the Bible to the category of sacred literature generally. The Hebrew-Christian Scriptures differ uniquely from all other religious writings in their witness to special revelation; . . . In stressing this fact, the "theology of the Word of God" and the evangelism of "the Bible says" are in formal agreement, and share in the rebellion against the classic liberal distrust of the special revelation claim that is everywhere implicit in the Bible.

Nonetheless they went on to recognize the fact that one who saw no essential differences between the position of Barth and that of Graham was "in need of theological lenses." The bulk of their comments then reflected upon the differences. They pointed out that in contrast to the "theology of the Word of God" that of Graham did not "rush to draw a line between what God says and what the Bible says. It does not locate what God says in the misty flats above the Bible, above its written propositions and words." In an even more important paragraph they carefully placed a marker between orthodoxy and neo-orthodoxy:

The Church may rejoice that an emphasis on the New Testament evangel is finding its way once again into pulpits from which it was long absent. In this proclamation of the evangel there is often a considerable similarity between those who hold the high view of the Bible and those who shy away from it. Whoever preaches the Gospel must lean heavily on the warnings of Jesus about sin and its connection with the wrath of God and the judgment to come, no less than upon His assurances of the gracious forgiveness and the welcome awaiting sinners who come to the Father "in Christ's name." The omission

of either of these elements is destructive of the Gospel. But the Gospel is far more definite than this; the simplest New Testament statement of it includes the substitutionary death of Christ for sinners and His bodily resurrection (I Cor. 15: 104). It is at this point of the sharper definition of the Gospel that the difference between evangelical and sub-evangelical preaching comes more clearly into view.²⁰

They had certainly distinguished their own position from that of the dialectical theologians, but they had done it in such gentle fashion that the meaning of their words--that the Barthian reconstruction denied essential elements in the Christian message, however valuable its service in combating liberalism--was lost to all but the initiated reader, and from their tone none would gain the impression that their subject was one which might have eternal consequences.

In contrast, the fundamentalists considered neo-orthodoxy to be another form of modernism. In a sermon printed in the Sword, Dr. R. Laird Harris, of Faith Theological Seminary, had traced the history of neo-orthodoxy and positioned it in the theological spectrum.²¹ Though he recognized the strong attacks made on classical liberalism by the neo-orthodox theologians, Harris credited the demise of liberalism to its identification with opinions about man which the catastrophes of the twentieth century made wholly untenable. It was not possible for modernists to cling to their earlier views without modification, so neo-orthodoxy grew as a position allowing them to retain their basic unbelief but bringing them more in line with the observable facts of existence and also relating them more satisfactorily to the mood of the times. He urged the name new modernism as more accurate than neo-orthodoxy. He pointed to the neo-orthodox habit of giving esoteric meanings to orthodox terminology, thereby usually denying the

historicity of the Christian events. Noting the same flaw which had been pointed out by Christianity Today, he stated that in the Barthian scheme "atonement becomes an accepting of our condition rather than a satisfaction of divine justice." Unlike the Christianity Today treatment, however, that of Harris left no impression that the differences with neo-orthodoxy were of less than ultimate importance. He concluded:

What, then, shall be our answer to neo-orthodoxy? When they use the old terms in a new meaning, what shall we do? Surely true Christians who see what Barthianism really means can be trusted with the answer.

Barthianism should first be understood. Then it should be feared just like the old style modernism, which, from a different angle, also denies the Bible, its Christ, and our salvation. Then it should be opposed as God's Word tells us to oppose all the wiles of the Devil.²²

The first strongly worded criticism of Graham in the pages of the Sword came in a July, 1956, article of Chester Tulga, "More Than Evangelicals." Only one line mentioned Graham. Tulga had referred to "the evangelism of Graham, which now depends for its support upon a working union of all sorts of modernists, middle-of-the-roaders and evangelicals which God is supposed to bless regardless of the teachings of His own Word."²³

In the September 14, 1956, issue of the Sword was included a carefully worded and brief article which had been written by Dr. Tom Malone, pastor of the Emmanuel Baptist Church, a strong fundamentalist and a graduate of Bob Jones University. The piece was titled "What Do You Think of Billy Graham?" Malone first modestly disclaimed any presumption that what he might write would "make or break" Graham. Graham was already "made," his meetings being the largest since the days of Billy Sunday. He then at length pointed out elements of

Graham's ministry which he could wholeheartedly endorse. He listed the elements he could endorse and discussed each in a paragraph:

1. I wholeheartedly endorse the man: Billy Graham.
2. I wholeheartedly endorse his message.
3. I endorse his motives. . . . to win the lost, churched or unchurched, to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.
4. I endorse wholeheartedly his ministry. His is a ministry of evangelism.

Malone believed, "Beyond any shadow of a doubt God has raised up Billy Graham along with many other men of God, in our day for the work of evangelism." But there were "two or three things" about the Billy Graham work that he could not wholeheartedly endorse. He told of two. First, he did not agree with Graham's recent endorsement of the Southern Baptist Cooperative Program. He then quoted from Graham's letter to the editor of the Texas Baptist Standard, discussed earlier in this chapter. After citing examples of non-orthodox speakers at Southern Baptist institutions and worldliness at Baptist colleges, Malone went on to the second area of disagreement with Graham. "I do not agree with Billy's sponsorship in many of his great campaigns." Recognizing Graham's desire to "win every soul he can," Malone yet challenged his insistence on modernistic endorsement. Malone declared.:

The Ministerial Association of nearly every city in America is officially a part of the modernistic National Council of Churches. He ought not to insist on the endorsement of such a "mixed multitude." . . . I personally think Billy's crowds would be greater, the net results greater, the body of Christ more edified, and the Lord Jesus more honored, if Billy were sponsored by the men about whom there is no question as to their orthodoxy. . . .

Beyond question the Bible teaches there can be no mutual relationship between a Bible-believing child of God and a religious but lost "blind leader of the blind." How can we reconcile any tolerance of liberalism with the teaching of II John 10, 11: "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed; For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds."²⁴

This tentatively written article was an indication of what would follow. At first the friendly tone would be used, but in a short time the spirit of controversy would cause both sides to use the more harsh phrases which were more common to religious disputes among those who believed what they believed.

Any lingering hope which John R. Rice might have had that Graham would back away from a full identification with the new evangelical challenge to fundamentalism was dispelled with the publication of the first issues of Christianity Today. Though the new magazine was more subdued in its criticism of fundamentalism than Eternity or Christian Life, it was no less certainly aligned with the new movement. In November, Rice made public the correspondence which led to Graham's withdrawal from the board of the Sword and gave his interpretation of the issues which divided them. A one-page article in the Sword asked, "Which Way, Billy Graham?"²⁵

Rice cited a letter from a reader asking questions about Graham and the appearance of Christianity Today and phrased his discussion of the issues partly as an answer to this letter. This was the editorial device he most often used in discussing controversial matters. He related that he had received many such enquiries concerning the position of Billy Graham, asserting that young evangelists had asked if they should follow Graham's lead in accepting liberal sponsorship. Rice first addressed himself to the publication of Christianity Today, a "venture sponsored largely by Dr. Graham," which was "unfortunate." He then characterized the magazine:

A magazine highbrow and formal in tone, by choice, with emphasis primarily on the scholarly instead of primarily on the spiritual, a magazine primarily of the schools and not primarily of the churches and soulwinners, a magazine somewhat friendly toward

Barthian theologians and partly unorthodox leaders, I feel will do little good and may do harm.

I do not believe that Dr. Carl Henry, the editor of Christianity Today, intended his editorial comparing Barth and Billy Graham to be an endorsement of neo-orthodoxy. I do not believe his friendly report on the large Methodist meeting to be an endorsement of the outright modernistic leadership and literature and education to which the Methodist church is wholly committed. But neither do I believe that Dr. Henry intended to repudiate either Barth or modernistic Methodist leadership. I think that Christianity Today is intended to be a middle-of-the-road publication not offensive to modernism and only slightly offensive to fundamentalists. I think there will be aspersions cast at fundamentalists from time to time, as in the first issue, and mild disagreement, but not denouncement, of modernism and unbelief. And I believe that the magazine definitely represents and is so intended to represent the Billy Graham viewpoint.

Rice then recounted the controversy within the Southern Baptist Convention and reported the circumstances behind Graham's letter to the Baptist Standard, his correspondence with Rice, and his request to be removed from the list of the co-operating board of the Sword of the Lord. He then printed a letter which he had sent to Graham which is of sufficient importance that it is included here in its entirety:

Dear Dr. Graham:

Very reluctantly, of course, I am coming to believe that you are right and that I should release you from the Co-operating Board of the Sword of the Lord, as you suggest. I am reluctant because of my personal love for you and even more because of my deep concern about evangelism and my great joy in your ministry. But, as you say, it is becoming increasingly apparent that we are not going the same direction, and that you cannot, in good conscience, back up the doctrinal position and principles stated on The Sword of the Lord front page every week.

I understand that you are generally sound in doctrine. I am not your enemy, not even your critic. But I know now that The Sword of the Lord does not speak for you when it defends fundamentalists, because you do not claim to be a fundamentalist. I know it does not speak for you when it exposes the modern unbelief and lack of scholarship in the Revised Standard Version which you recommend. I know now that The Sword of the Lord does not represent you when it denounces the folly of Ferre, Brunner,

Buttrick, McCracken, all of whom have spoken at Southern Baptist Seminary, and whose books are required reading at Louisville, since you do not feel as we do about the fight against modernism when it comes among Southern Baptists. You are for the fundamentals of the faith, but you are embarrassed at my fight which is getting very strong and definite results. I am sure also that we do not represent you in our opposition to the young "intellectuals," the left-wing fringe including Bernard Ramm, Dr. Carl Henry, Dr. Vernon Grounds, etc., and the Christian Life editorial policy. So in justice to you, and to us, we will drop your name from the Sword of the Lord Co-operating Board. And I wish you well. I shall pray for you daily. I shall rejoice in God's blessing upon your ministry.

It was good to be in your home. God bless your family and all your workers. Your team is a wonderful crowd and I love them everyone.

I will always be glad to hear from you, and we will rejoice exceedingly over every soul won to Christ in your meetings.

In the Savior's name, yours,

John R. Rice

Rice ended the article: "We advise all Christians to rejoice in the blessings of God upon Dr. Graham and the souls saved under his ministry. We hope that they will continue to pray for him as we do earnestly, daily, and lovingly."²⁶

NOTES

CHAPTER 9

¹Monroe Parker, More Desirable Than Gold (Owatonna, Minn.: Pillsbury Baptist Bible College, 1963), p. 42.

²Bob Jones, Sr., "Evangelism Today," Sword, January 13, 1956, XXII, 11.

³Rice, "Another Modernist Attacks Billy Graham," Sword, February 3, 1956, XXII, 2, 10-11.

⁴"New York Eggs All In One Basket," Christian Century, September 21, 1955, LXXII, 1076.

⁵Theodore Gill, "Evangelists Three," Christian Century, March 23, 1955, LXXII, 369; Billy Graham, Peace with God (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1953).

⁶Rice, "Another Modernist," p. 11.

⁷Ibid.

⁸A. M. Ramsey, "The Menace of Fundamentalism," Chicago Daily News, February 3, 1956.

⁹Rice, "English Archbishop Attacks Billy Graham's Fundamentalism," Sword, March 2, 1956, XXII, 5.

¹⁰Rice, "Modern Critics Beset Fundamentalist Billy Graham," Sword, April 6, 1956, XXII, 1, 7.

¹¹Fundamentalism: A Religious Problem (London: The Times, 1956).

¹²Rice, "Modern Critics," p. 7.

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Rice, "Southern Baptists, Hail," Sword, May 12, 1950, XXI, 1.

¹⁵Rice, "Dr. Lee Roberson Attacked by Southern Baptist Leaders," Sword, March 11, 1955, XXI, 3, 5, 7.

¹⁶Sword, April 8, 1955, XXI, 1.

¹⁷Letter by Graham, Sword, November 23, 1956, XXII, 2; first printed in Baptist Standard, April, 7, 1956.

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Christianity Today, October 15, 1956, 1, 1.

²⁰Ibid., pp. 22-23.

²¹R. Laird Harris, "Barthian Theology Today," Sword, February 18, 1955, XII, 1, 5-7.

²²Ibid., p. 7.

²³Sword, July 27, 1956, XXII, 1.

²⁴Tom Malone, "What Do You Think of Billy Graham?" Sword, September 14, 1956, XXII, 2.

²⁵Rice, "Which Way, Billy Graham?" Sword, November 23, 1956, XXII, 2.

²⁶Ibid.

CHAPTER 10

CHRISTIANITY TODAY AND THE NEW COALITION

Christianity Today has its origin in a deepfelt desire to express historical Christianity to the present generation. Neglected, slighted, misrepresented--evangelical Christianity needs a clear voice, to speak with conviction and love, and to state its true position and its relevance to the world crisis. A generation has grown up unaware of the basic truths of the Christian faith taught in the Scriptures and expressed in the creeds of the historic evangelical churches.¹

Thus did the new magazine describe its purpose in the first issue on October 15, 1956. Here was an attempt to force the churches to give renewed attention to the claims of orthodoxy, in a form hardly diluted since the great denominational struggles of the twenties and thirties. The strategy was to secure respectability by repudiating separatist fundamentalism and thus gain a hearing for the fundamentalist theology. Carl Henry, who would guide the fortunes of the magazine through its formative years, represented the conservative wing of the new evangelical group. Though at times others of that group would lose sight of the purpose for which the abrasiveness of fundamentalism had been left behind, Henry would ever remember that the forwarding of orthodoxy, and not the alteration of orthodoxy, was the goal of the new evangelicalism. In the section concerning "Science and Religion," in a volume, which he edited in 1957, entitled Contemporary Evangelical Thought, he warned of the danger in the concessions being made to evolutionary theory by other new evangelicals, such as Ramm and Carnell.² When Fuller Theological Seminary would years later move away from adherence to the

full inspiration of the Bible, Henry and Christianity Today would more resolutely insist upon it. Nonetheless, Christianity Today fully reflected the emphases of the new evangelicalism and was one of its authoritative spokesmen. The outlines of the movement can be seen clearly in its pages.

It has already been remarked that new evangelicalism tended to see itself as a middle position avoiding the extremes of fundamentalism on the one hand and non-orthodoxy on the other. Early in the career of the publication this was made explicit in several articles. Two articles which were built on the theme contrasted "The Perils of Independency" with "The Perils of Ecumenicity." Separatist fundamentalism was represented by the American Council of Christian Churches; the liberal drive for Church Unionism was strong in the National Council of Churches. Over against these two groups was set the National Association of Evangelicals. It was "opposed in temper" to both, though it subscribed "to some concepts of each of the extremist groups."

The first article treated the errors of fundamentalism and tended to retrace steps, taken long before in the debates of the forties between the NAE and the ACC, but given new meaning because of the resurgence of conservative evangelicalism and the renewed opportunity for conservatives to work within the established churches. Christianity Today first recognized that, whatever the failings of the fundamentalists, "those who honor fidelity to doctrine cannot but endorse the concern for theological soundness." The theological orthodoxy of independency was recognized. This had always been the first point in the discussion made by the NAE men. The next part of the discussion also followed

the debates of the previous decade.

Independency tends to produce a divisive spirit. It refuses to cooperate even with those with whom it is in essential theological agreement. Its concept of separation forbids fellowship with men sound in the faith but associated with objectionable movements. It indicts others for allegiances they have held for years, and often promotes a divisiveness that is disruptive.³

It was admitted that independency often began as a movement against "heresy or apostasy" and further admitted that where this was the case it could not be labeled as divisive, but it was also pointed out that many times a protest which began as a movement against apostasy would develop a psychology which would promote further divisions which had nothing to do with apostasy. The example offered was that usually produced in such discussions--the split-ridden career of those who withdrew from the Presbyterian church with Gresham Machen. Christianity Today charged, "The divisiveness of Independency becomes so highly exclusive that it excludes true believers from its fellowship."⁴

Christianity Today found the basic motivation of ecumenism, concern for the unity of the body of Christ, to be as commendable as the desire of independency to preserve the theological integrity of the body. But again, the areas where evangelicals were forced to dissent were those which received emphasis. The major criticism of ecumenism offered was, naturally enough, laxity in regard to truth. The drive for unity was said to be often accompanied by "a rather pale and anemic concern for basic Christian doctrine." Various ecumenical leaders were quoted as supporting organic union into one organization, which Christianity Today opposed as being impossible of achievement, inadequate as a primary goal of Christian effort, and productive of an intolerance toward those

who wished to remain without. Ecumenism was accused of having "little use or respect for those with whom it differs, easily regarding as fanatical and divisive those who refuse to cooperate within its orbit of inclusivism."⁵

Reinforcing its middle position, Christianity Today concluded that both independency and ecumenism were "essentially heretical. Neither one is truly biblical nor finally acceptable." "This much is clear: neither movement is entirely in error. But neither possesses the sum total of truth."⁶ To the fundamentalists, such a position was far from acceptable. While fundamentalists, such as Rice, had made the same criticisms of the American Council leadership that were here made against fundamentalism generally, they made them from a perspective different from that which Christianity Today here assumed. The new evangelical disassociated himself from both the fundamentalist and the ecumenicist, then proceeded to behave as if he were treating the weakness of two groups guilty of offenses of somewhat equal severity. Such a posture, to the fundamentalist, seemed to be a cowardly retreat from the battle. If the theological battle lines were drawn, as the fundamentalist never questioned, on the basis of the great fundamentals of the faith, then, however unpleasant an orthodox warrior might be, his offense was of an entirely different order from that of the modernist who denied the faith and led others to the same denial. Though fundamentalism might not possess the total truth, as differences upon important points of biblical interpretation proved, the position represented by the label "ecumenism" was totally in error--not because of its ecumenicity but because of its "modernism." As the new evangelicals sought to create

a position distinct from fundamentalism, in order to engineer the restoration of orthodoxy to mainstream respectability, they would increasingly exhibit a tendency to muddy the theological issues in their presentation to the broader community, while trying to maintain the integrity of their own constituency. This was the most difficult task which confronted them, and it was indicated in this early attempt. As fully as the fundamentalists, the evangelicals believed that the central issues were those which pertained to the great doctrines of the faith. At the same time, they knew that controversy over these doctrines would damage their re-entry into the Protestant mainstream. Because of these two factors, their position often seemed ambiguous. Ambiguity is of course the characteristic of any central position, but the desire to reach out to the broader community without loosening the theological convictions of their evangelical followers made the problem particularly acute for the new evangelicals. The very real uncertainty which they felt toward the Barthians greatly added to this difficulty. Particularly when the division in neo-orthodoxy cast Barth in the role of defender of the faith, against the "neo-liberalism" of Bultmann, it became impossible for any consistent interpretation of the contemporary theological world to be constructed by anyone of the new evangelical school. At times they warned of the diluting effect of neo-orthodoxy, as Henry had, even in the Christian Life article heralding the new evangelical position.⁷ At other times they adopted neo-orthodox phraseology, though investing it with greater substance. Among new evangelicals, Edward John Carnell expressed the greatest appreciation for Barth, possibly because his long study of Reinhold Niebuhr made him especially conscious of the

conservative implications of the later Barth in the total theological picture.

In April of 1956 Christian Life carried a companion article to the one which had presented the changes in evangelical thought. "Is Liberal Theology Changing?" reflected the considerable optimism which the new evangelicals felt because of the conservative shift in theological discussion, which in America came during and after the Second World War.⁸ The article reported that "repentant liberals" were "scattering like dust raised by a housewife's broom to a dozen theological positions--many of them not far from what evangelicals believed to be orthodox Christianity." It was said to be no longer possible to "separate Protestant churches into two watertight compartments labeled 'liberal' and 'fundamental.'" The article gave full credit to neo-orthodoxy for the decline which doctrinaire liberalism had suffered and stressed those elements of dialectical theology which have appeal to evangelicals. The emphases in modern theology which Christian Life chose to list were:

1. A more respectful attitude toward the Bible.
2. A re-emphasis on the sovereignty of God.
3. A higher view of the Person of Christ.
4. A re-emphasis on the conversion experience.
5. An acknowledgement of the supernatural in Christianity.

It was recognized that a "yawning gulf" still existed between most modern theologians and orthodoxy, but no very careful analysis was made of these differences. The importance of symbolism and paradox in neo-orthodoxy was pointed out, but their usual effect in denying historicity to the Christian events was not made apparent. The dependence of all contemporary theological schools on the "higher critical view" of the

Bible was recognized, and was said to constitute the greatest variance from the position of orthodoxy. At that point three evangelical spokesmen who had been very critical of the various non-orthodox positions were quoted. J. Barton Payne of Trinity Bible Seminary was quoted giving the strongest warnings:

This mixture of belief in the Bible and doubt of it appears fundamentally unstable, a temporary situation perhaps resulting from world conditions. Evangelicals should make all use of the trend and work and pray that seekers may be led to full faith and a banishing of doubt. But they should also recognize the danger, for the appeal of biblical authority may be used as bait to lure seekers into such full religious doubt as to banish truly yielded faith.⁹

More characteristic of the tone of the article was a quote from a spokesman of Wheaton College: "This new movement is paradoxical and inconsistent, but we must remember these men have come through 'the long night of liberalism.' So let's not be ready to hit them over the head. If we don't draw our pharisaical robes about us, perhaps the younger men can be caused to move to a more consistent position." In these two quotes the difficulty of the new evangelical analysis is revealed. The move toward conservatism led these younger, intellectual evangelicals to hope that a general turning toward an orthodox position might be possible. The vision of raising in the established churches the standard of solidly orthodox theology prodded them to alter carefully their own position, to avoid giving offense to those moving from liberalism to neo-orthodoxy, in the hope that they might be brought fully to an orthodox theology. The danger to their own integrity in such a strategy was seen more fully by some evangelicals than by others. Some, such as Donald Grey Barhhouse, assumed that involvement with leaders of non-orthodoxy would have no effect on the evangelicals, and

were shocked when signs of faltering in areas he considered essential began to appear. Others, such as Carl Henry, warned from the beginning that the new openness to theological dialogue involved dangers to theological faithfulness, though he seemed confident that these warnings were sufficient to protect against these dangers.

For this study the most important statement in this Christian Life article was made by Harold Lindsell, of Fuller Seminary, the successor of Carl Henry as editor of Christianity Today. It revealed a change in the evangelical attitude toward those of other theological positions: "Fundamentalism has been chastened so that it is sloughing off its reactionary character. It has become more positive. It now attacks the viewpoint, not the individual. A man may entertain whatever viewpoint he wishes and the fundamentalist may disagree with him without assuming that he is dishonest, a scoundrel and one who should be hung from the nearest gibbet."¹⁰ This was a perspective which the separatist fundamentalists were not prepared to adopt. They insisted that specifically the opposite was correct and claimed biblical warrant for the view that men who departed from the fundamentals of the faith did so from base motives and not from any genuine intellectual sensitivities. They pointed to countless Scripture passages in which false teachers were assigned the most creditless motives, and they declared that to believe otherwise was the result of confusion over the relationship of these motives to salvation and ultimately of salvation to the fundamental truths of Scripture. No fundamentalist would, in a thoughtful moment, portray adherence to all the "fundamentals of the faith" as essential to salvation, for they recognized the possibility

of a person coming to belief in Christ as Savior, who had no knowledge of important elements of the fundamentals. At the same time they insisted that though a person might be saved while possessing a very incomplete knowledge of the fundamentals, the regenerative act of the Holy Spirit would certainly preclude any wholesale denial of the fundamental truths of the Christian faith. No very specific efforts were made to define this action or to elaborate how many fundamentals might be denied before a profession should be considered suspect, but it was an important element of the fundamentalist analysis that, in general, it was not fellow believers with whom they were contending, but false teachers who from base motives served their father, the Devil. The attempt to drive a wedge between the conversion experience and the fundamentals of the faith was seen as one of the earliest tactics of modernism and one of the most serious errors of the new evangelicals. No doubt the new evangelicals were less than candid on the matter, and in most cases their opinion of specific non-orthodox leaders is difficult to ascertain. If the new evangelicals believed what they preached, they must surely conclude that many of the men with whom they began to be involved outside the evangelical circle, judging from their published writings, did not accept the minimum that the evangelicals declared to be necessary to salvation. In time, this became one of the deepest sources of ambiguity in the new evangelical position.

This ambiguity was further revealed in a series of articles published through four issues of Christianity Today during June and July of 1957. The articles, under the title "Dare We Renew the Modernist-Fundamentalist Conflict?", were abridgments of lectures

given by Carl Henry at Northern Baptist Theological Seminary in May of that year.¹¹ The reaction to the articles revealed even more certainly their ambiguity. Some wrote challenging what they believed to be the call of the editor for the renewal of controversy while others took exception with the editor in his denial of the need for controversy. Liberalism of the Fosdickian variety, neo-orthodoxy primarily of the Barthian variety, and fundamentalism of the American Council variety furnished the subjects for the first three articles respectively, while the last suggested the direction in which Henry desired evangelicalism to move. Even at this distance it remains difficult to provide a clear interpretation of these important articles, though some elements are recognizable.

The recent publication of the autobiography of Harry Emerson Fosdick provided the structure of the first installment.¹² Henry provided a page-by-page critique of the self-justification of the aging minister. He seemed irritated that Fosdick's autobiography was not cast in the form of a confession of life-long theological error, and wrote:

Dr. Fosdick's affirmation of the theological relevance of last-generation liberalism comes as a keen disappointment to many evangelical leaders. Prone to assume that liberalism had been chastened, curbed and forced to abandon its defenses by the drift of the times, if not by the authority of biblical revelation, these evangelicals will find in Dr. Fosdick's The Living of These Days a revelation that he has not really lived through our era with theological awareness; . . . Casting the fortunes of liberalism in this unrepentant mold will not only evoke wide disappointment, but it will provide the conviction that the time for theological controversy is once again upon us.¹³

Henry also wrote, "Modern churchmen who permit only secondary criticisms of classic liberal theology make its adequacy a contemporary issue through continued espousal " and he was critical of liberals who

refused to "share Karl Barth's and Emil Brunner's sharp criticism of classic liberal theology." In the first article he seemed to be saying that by refusing to abandon liberalism for neo-orthodoxy, Fosdick and the Christian Century were perpetuating the lines of theological division laid down in earlier years. He particularly complained of the Century's continued unwillingness to recognize the efforts which the new evangelicals were making to achieve respectability. Nonetheless, he went on to point out that the view of Fosdick and the Christian Century was certainly a minority view and that most of the great centers of the old liberal thought had long been engaged in making adjustments in liberal theology and were "eager to get beyond the modernist-fundamentalist controversy."¹⁴

The critique of fundamentalism offered in the second article centered largely on one alleged weakness. Henry charged that fundamentalism had become absorbed in defending the few basic fundamentals to such an extent that it failed to present a full-orbed theology. The fixation on the fundamentals crowded out study and preaching of other doctrines and so drained the energies of the fundamentalists that other legitimate church activities suffered. This was an easy charge to make, but one equally easy to disprove. Donald Tinder, in his study of fundamentalist Baptists, concluded that fundamentalists in fact preached on a great variety of themes and that the broad range of Christian interests was well represented in their work.¹⁵ The fact that Tinder is today the book review editor of Christianity Today adds weight to his conclusions in this area. The impression that fundamentalists were concerned only with defending the fundamentals in a controversial manner

arises from the fact that most persons outside of fundamentalism come into contact with the movement only in this area of fundamentalist activity. The routine activities which fundamentalists carried out, much like other evangelicals, would be little cause for comment or notice. Furthermore, it was the rigorous defense of the faith which distinguished fundamentalists from other conservative evangelicals, and it was naturally to the point of difference that attention would be called. Defense of the faith certainly occupied an important place in the fundamentalist program and in the case of certain leaders may in fact have virtually excluded other concerns, but the picture here presented by Carl Henry was far from accurate in charging that "concentration on 'the fundamentals' often displaced doctrinal responsibilities of the church in the wider dimensions of historic creeds and confessions of faith."¹⁶

In Henry's view the fundamentalist lack of scholarly concern with areas outside of the fundamentals was matched by an unconcern with the social implications of Christianity. He contrasted earlier fundamentalism, represented in his treatment by the authors of the famous 1909 volumes on The Fundamentals, with the fundamentalist leadership which had arisen since the defeat of the conservatives in the denominational struggles.¹⁷ The early breadth of concern and depth of scholarly endeavor was succeeded by a bitter polemical stand based on slogans inherited from an earlier day, rather than careful study. Henry then offered his interpretation of the division within conservative evangelicalism which had accompanied its resurgence since the Second World War. He repeated what had by then become the new evangelical explanation for their repudiation of fundamentalism.

The word fundamentalism had become a term of reproach branding one as an obscurantist, and this liberal charge was given credibility by "the reactionary spirit of some present fundamentalist groups who seemed to align themselves against higher education, science and cultural interests." Those aware of the undesirable connotations preferred to be called "conservatives" or "evangelicals." However, the real offense of fundamentalism in Henry's eyes was its abrasive manner in defense of the faith, and in matters not so much concerned with the defense of the faith as with personal disputes. He charged:

The real bankruptcy of fundamentalism has resulted not so much from a reactionary spirit--lamentable as this was--as from a harsh temperament, a spirit of lovelessness and strife contributed by much of its leadership in the recent past. One of the ironies of contemporary church history is that the more fundamentalists stressed separation from apostasy as a theme in their churches, the more a spirit of lovelessness seemed to prevail. The theological conflict with liberalism deteriorated into an attack upon organizations and personalities. This condemnation, in turn, grew to include conservative churchmen and churches not ready to align with separatist movements. . . . More recently, the evangelistic ministry of Billy Graham and of other evangelical leaders, and efforts whose disapproval of liberalism and advocacy of conservative Christianity are beyond dispute, have become the target of bitter volubility.¹⁸

Henry then again insisted that the defects of contemporary fundamentalism were not present in the early days of the movement, claiming, "Its early leadership reflected balance and ballast, and less of bombast and battle. Only later did a divisive disposition show itself, plunging the evangelical movement into internal conflict." He then explained the split which was occurring in conservatism:

The recrudescence of fundamentalism during the Second World War involved a diversification within the movement. On one side were those eager to detach the great theological affirmations from a recent negative reactionary spirit and to strengthen constructive theological and ecclesiastical activity; on the other,

those who add to reactionary spirit by multiplying divisions and by disowning brethren in the former category. The first group insists that fundamentalists of the latter definition are severing themselves from the spirit of historic evangelical Christianity; the second group claims that evangelicals of the former category are making a subtle retreat to a compromised fundamentalism.¹⁹

Fundamentalists of course would reject this analysis. They would point out that the charges of divisiveness and lovelessness, coupled with that of reactionary obscurantism, had been the chief weapons of the liberals in the days of the modernist-fundamentalist controversy. Certainly, few secular or liberal historians would be prepared to accept the pacific picture of early fundamentalist leadership painted by Henry and other new evangelicals. The kinds of activities carried on by Jones, Rice, and McIntire easily are paralleled by those of the earlier day, and it seems unlikely that the early leaders were appreciably more "enlightened." Certainly individual fundamentalists of the early day could be pointed out whose education was broader or deeper--the loss of the great educational institutions to liberalism was a serious blow to orthodoxy--but the distinction between early and later fundamentalist leadership claimed by Henry was basically artificial. "Fighting fundamentalists" were so-called long before the days of McIntire or Rice.

Henry concluded the article by calling on evangelicals to repudiate fundamentalism and move to the new evangelical position. Citing the searching criticism of liberalism made by Barth and Brunner, he asked whether evangelicals would not submit their own position to the same kind of criticism. "Should evangelical leaders as candidly admit the excesses of fundamentalism as have neo-orthodox leaders relative to the prevailing liberalism?" He answered, "They dare not do less." Finally

he declared, "If modernism stands discredited as a perversion of the scriptural theology, certainly fundamentalism in this contemporary expression stands discredited as a perversion of the biblical spirit."²⁰

The next installment examined neo-orthodoxy in a generally favorable manner, stressing its divergence from liberalism though recognizing the areas where it held back from orthodoxy. Hailing "the Return to Doctrine," Carl Henry stated, "No fact of recent Protestant theology is more conspicuous than its emphasis that apart from the clear recognition of the supernaturalness, nay the deity, of Christ, only the shadows of Christianity remain." He observed, "Since 1927 Barth has championed the Virgin Birth of Jesus against almost a century of speculative doubt and denial by liberal tradition. . . ." And later: "While Barth assuredly does not affirm all that an evangelical doctrine of atonement requires, he does speak of the sinless Christ who suffers in our stead bearing the wrath of God which must fall on sinful man." And still later: "Even with respect to Scripture as the norm of Christian doctrine, Barth has given us many statements which, as far as they go, have an evangelical ring."²¹ Assessing the contemporary theological context, Henry asserted, "The dramatic element in this theological reversal is simply this: in the first third of our century theological initiative lay with those who labeled the defenders of these doctrines as obscurantists; today, in contrast, the prominent theological thrust defines the discard and neglect of these doctrines as violence to Christianity." Nonetheless, he admitted, "It would be overstatement to imply that in the recovery of these doctrinal emphases Barth and the neo-orthodox theologians return in all essentials to an historic evangelical exposition."²² A careful discussion of the

weaknesses of neo-orthodoxy followed in which the strength of many of his previous assertions is seriously, though not openly, modified. The refusal to identify revelation with the Bible was criticized, and the subjective element which this introduces into the neo-orthodox christology was pointed out. In the end Henry, of course, found neo-orthodoxy to be less than biblical and stated, "Only the preservation of the total scriptural revelation justifies a theology's claim to be biblical."²³ On the whole, however, his analysis placed neo-orthodoxy very close to the evangelical position, and carried no implication that the differences were in any sense ultimate. Henry actually suggested that the neo-orthodox sensitivity to divine confrontation was an improvement over the fundamentalist call to salvation. Claiming that "the Christianity of the twentieth century had quite obscured the God who continually encounters and confronts man," he charged that modernism "exchanged the divine initiative in special revelation for the human quest for God." But he went on:

Fundamentalism had stressed Christian experience in terms of doctrinal assent and outward social restraints, appended of course to an initial experience of rebirth whose vitality was to be renewed in periodic crises of spiritual surrender. . . . The contemporary approximation of the New Testament emphasis on spiritual immediacy as preserved by the religion of the Mediator is therefore a gain. We who minister to this tensed generation dare not neglect the continual unveiling of God in Christ encountering every lost soul in creation, precreation, conscience, judgment, and the call to repentance and faith. Nor dare we neglect the sway of the confronting Christ over our own souls, framed by creation and refashioned by redemption primarily for a life of personal fellowship in his service.²⁴

In the final installment of the series, Henry described "The evangelical Responsibility." He first declared:

Evangelical theology has nothing to fear, and much to gain, from aligning itself earnestly with the current plea for a return to biblical theology. To measure this moving front of

creative theology sympathetically, to understand its concern and courage and to name its weaknesses without depreciating its strength will best preserve relevant theological interaction with the contemporary debate.²⁵

How this alignment of evangelicalism with the emphases of the dialectical theologians might be executed had been demonstrated in Henry's discussion of the divine-human encounter as an improvement over the fundamentalist call to salvation. In adopting the neo-orthodox terminology, Henry had infused them with evangelical meaning. In a sense this process reversed the habit of the neo-orthodox theologians of using orthodox terminology but draining them of evangelical meaning.

Henry went on to suggest the direction which evangelicalism should take. Positive preaching was urged for the pulpits of evangelical churches; the fundamentalist tendency to identify Christian living with abstinence from "dubious social externals" was to be superseded by a new ethic "comprehending the whole of the moral law in fuller exposition of love for God and neighbor," and a program of Christian social action was to be developed. Evangelical confidence in the concept of design in the universe made possible new constructive approaches to science, and a new evangelical effort in education was suggested. Henry's instructions concerning the need to maintain the integrity of the body of Christ and at the same time provide for the fellowship of the believers do not make entirely clear what he was advocating. He insisted that basic doctrinal agreement is necessary to the unity of the church but warned that evangelicals have sometimes excluded those who should not be excluded. At the same time he seemed in his concluding remarks to lament the demise of heresy trials and to urge the need for purity of the faith.

Henry seemed to be further laying the plans for the restoration of orthodoxy within the established churches. In the four articles, the position with which he most consistently expressed sympathy was neo-orthodoxy. It was toward the "Theologians of the Word" that he was the warmest. He was suggesting that neo-orthodoxy move closer to orthodoxy by a fuller repudiation of liberalism, while evangelical repudiation of fundamentalism would bring it closer to neo-orthodoxy. That would form the basis of a new working coalition in the churches. Most of the tenets of the older liberalism had already been challenged by the dialectical theologians, and the division between fundamentalists and evangelicals seemed certain. The prospects for the new coalition seemed bright, with the religious boom then in progress in America promising success to whatever theology controlled the churches. In the Billy Graham New York campaign the widest support yet given by the established churches further stirred the hopes of the evangelicals that orthodoxy might recover its position in the center. The churches must be recaptured if the historic evangelical position was to be presented to their generation. But the new evangelical intention would be severely tested in the coming New York campaign. Even the new evangelicals most strongly committed to the assault on the mainstream would bristle inwardly at working with some who had been outspoken in denial of basic parts of the evangelical faith, and some evangelicals would raise strong objection to the notion that the day of controversy was over. The controversy over New York would lead to the final division between fundamentalism and evangelicalism.

NOTES

CHAPTER 10

¹"Why Christianity Today?" Christianity Today, October 15, 1956, I, 20.

²Carl F. H. Henry, ed., Contemporary Evangelical Thought (New York: Harper & Bros., 1957), pp. 250-252, 267-268, 279.

³"The Perils of Independency," Christianity Today, November 12, 1956, I, 20-23.

⁴Ibid., p. 22.

⁵"The Perils of Ecumenicity," Christianity Today, November 26, 1956, I, 20-22.

⁶Ibid., p. 22.

⁷Christian Life, March, 1956, p. 19.

⁸"Is Liberal Theology Changing?" Christian Life, April, 1956, pp. 19-22.

⁹Ibid., p. 22.

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹"Dare We Renew the Modernist-Fundamentalist Controversy?" Christianity Today, in four parts: "The Modernist Revision," June 10, 1957, I, 3-6; "The Fundamentalist Reduction," June 24, 1957, I, 23-26; "The Contemporary Restoration," July 8, 1957, I, 16-18; "The Evangelical Responsibility," July 22, 1957, I, 23-26, 38.

¹²Harry Emerson Fosdick, The Living of These Years (New York: Harper, 1957).

¹³Christianity Today, June 10, 1957, 6.

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Donald Tinder, "Fundamentalist Baptists in the Northern and Western United States" (Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 1972), p. 327.

¹⁶Christianity Today, June 24, 1957, I, 26.

¹⁷A. C. Dixon, ed., The Fundamentals (Chicago: Testimony, 1912).

¹⁸Christianity Today, June 24, 1957, I, 26.

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Ibid.

²¹Christianity Today, July 8, 1957, I, 15-16.

²²Ibid.

²³Ibid., p. 18.

²⁴Ibid.

²⁵Christianity Today, July 24, 1957, I, 23.

CHAPTER 11

ECUMENICAL EVANGELISM

The final division of conservative evangelicalism came as the preparations for the Billy Graham evangelistic campaign in New York City revealed that Graham had fully cast his lot with the established churches. By the time of the opening meeting on May 15, 1957, the division had passed the point where reconciliation was possible, and there was little evidence of desire for reconciliation on either side. The New York crusade marked Graham's final acceptance by the Protestant establishment and indeed by American society generally. He would be little inclined from that time on to hesitate because of any objections offered by the separatist fundamentalists. After New York the fundamentalists would consider Graham hopelessly compromised, and his program of ecumenical evangelism would be seen as the major opportunity for non-orthodox Protestant leadership to infect the conservative churches. During the winter and early spring of 1956-57, the discussion would become more and more bitter, and Rice and Jones would be moved far toward the position which McIntire had long held. The cooperation of fundamentalist and evangelical, common during the forties but subjected to increasing tension in the early years of the fifties, would finally break down. The governing boards of countless conservative institutions would be shuffled, and the institutions would begin to assume an explicitly "fundamentalist" or "evangelical" outlook. The great

success of the New York crusade and the popularity of Graham generally would pull many toward the evangelical position. In comparison, the fundamentalists would emerge as a hardly significant minority ignored by the broader community, except when the more politically oriented among them, such as McIntire, would gain attention because of some essentially secular activity. Nonetheless, the battle over separation never really ended, even in the most "evangelical" institutions.

Most conservative evangelicals were deeply certain of the need to oppose modernism and remained suspicious of the activities of non-evangelical clergymen. Few were really convinced by the claims of the new evangelicals that the liberals had deserted their former positions and were on the verge of accepting evangelical orthodoxy in great numbers. Some suggested that the new pose of liberalism was even more dangerous than the old modernism. They pointed out that neo-orthodoxy denied most of the fundamentals over which the struggles of the early years of the century had been fought. Many agreed with Cornelius Van Til, of Westminster Theological Seminary, that the dialectical theology should be labeled a new modernism rather than a new orthodoxy.¹ James DeForest Murch, in an editorial in United Evangelical Action, the official organ of the National Association of Evangelicals, stated that he generally agreed with the analysis offered by Henry in "Dare We Renew the Controversy?" but the bulk of his comments emphasized two things which he felt needed to be said in relation to the article: "The day of controversy is not over"; "the new ecumenical movement is a threat to the Christian faith far more dangerous than that of classic liberalism." He went on to present the fundamentalist interpretation

of the important place which controversy held in Christian history, stressing that the battle of "divine truth against human error" was one which could never be neglected. He warned, "If we think for one minute that we have passed through something dubbed 'The Age of Controversy' and are moving into a new era where all is to be love and light, we are tragically mistaken." He went on, "This is still a day of moral declension and theological apostasy." Though the setting in which error was presented changed from generation to generation, "Satan and error are basically the same in every age. Controversy will go on until the author of lies and all his collaborators are cast into the lake of fire and brimstone. If we ever forget or minimize this fact we are lost." He insisted that the new ecumenical theology would attempt to synthesize all positions into a theology acceptable to "the coming great church" and warned:

Too many of our evangelical theologians are being lured into, not compromise, perhaps, but certainly compromising situations, with promises of freedom to present their views and maintain them within the structure of the "coming great Church." They seem to be blinded to the ultimate objective of their seducers and to the cleverness of their strategy. They seem to be unaware that the apparently plausible minimal theological statements of the ecumenists are sheer compromise of Bible truth because their "Word of God" is not the Bible, their "Son of God" is not the Christ of the New Testament, their "cross," their "atonement," their "resurrection," . . . are not the same as revealed in the New Testament. The ecumenical "double-talk" of today is far more treacherous than the "double-talk" of the Modernist which misled so many thousands of Christian ministers and leaders in the past generation. Furthermore, it is being devised for the purpose of eventually delivering Protestantism into the clutches of a new Roman hierarchy and building a church which is not the church of the New Testament.²

Murch had not accepted any of the basic elements in the analysis offered by Henry but had challenged the authenticity of the modern

return to the Bible. Over the next years Murch would continue to issue such warnings. Nonetheless, Murch and the National Association of Evangelicals were enthusiastic in support of the New York crusade. This suggests that many supporting ecumenical evangelism and Graham had little sympathy with the rest of the new evangelical philosophy. This increased the confusion and the tragedy of the division. Had Graham not so fully identified himself with the total new evangelical program, or had the fundamentalists not made Graham the divider between themselves and other evangelicals, the bitterness of the division would have been avoided. Had new evangelicalism, rather than Billy Graham, become the issue, the fundamentalists would have been joined by a far greater number. Many would be the evangelicals who would continue to support Graham--thus becoming "evangelicals" who would at the same time express deep reservations, and even repudiation, of the new evangelical program. Moreover, many, perhaps most, conservative Christians were not aware of the significance of the new evangelical program and were also unaware of the basis for the fundamentalist attack upon Graham. In such circumstances, most naturally fell into the evangelical camp.

Before the New York campaign, the Graham organization met the criticisms of the sponsorship of the meetings by non-orthodox churchmen by denials. They took the position that the policy was to secure the backing of conservatives and that when non-evangelicals were given positions of leadership it was simply an error. In 1951 a Graham official had written Robert Ketcham, who had stated that Graham insisted on modernist representation on crusade committees, denying that anyone who might be termed liberal had ever served on a Graham

committee.³ During 1952 Graham had stated in a letter to John R. Rice,

"Contrary to any rumors that are constantly floating about, we have never had a modernist on our Executive Committee and we have never been sponsored by the Council of Churches in any city except Shreveport and Greensboro--both small towns where the majority of ministers are evangelical."⁴ In spring of 1955 while in Scotland it had seemed that he and Rice reached an understanding on the matter of non-orthodox sponsorship. Graham had indicated that his intention was to invite all the Protestant churches to participate in the crusades, but to restrict positions of leadership to orthodox men. He had indicated that at times, such as in Atlanta, the committees had been set up before he arrived, and they were not according to his wishes. He had denied any part in bringing John S. Bonnell to Scotland and had indicated that he strongly disapproved Bonnell's coming. Rice reported his view of the understanding which had been reached ". . . He has definitely pledged that he will not have any man in leadership in his campaigns to represent him officially who is not true to the inspiration of the Bible, the deity of Christ, His blood atonement and such fundamental truths."⁵

Graham, of course, found in the preparations for New York that the non-evangelical community would accept no such arrangement, that to gain the widest possible support the established churches would have to be given full representation. Looking toward the New York campaign, Christian Century ^{like} early urged that Graham be "as publicly explicit about his ecumenicity as he is privately. . . ." ⁵⁰⁶ The change in his position can be seen in the difference in attitude toward Bonnell in Scotland and in New York. In Scotland, Graham had denied inviting Bonnell and

had not even introduced him to the audience, leaving this for one of his lieutenants. In New York, Bonnell was on the executive committee of the crusade. The Graham organization would no longer deny the fact of non-orthodox sponsorship. Instead, a campaign in the evangelical press sought to change the thinking of conservatives on the matter of separation. This was necessary because the Protestant Council of New York would sponsor the crusade in that city, and no one could claim that that group was generally orthodox.

In an interview reported in the June, 1956, Christian Life, Graham opened the campaign against the fundamentalist version of separation. The line laid down here would be followed in nearly all subsequent discussions of the issue by supporters of ecumenical evangelism. He first described a mellowing theological world, with "extreme liberalism within the church" in full retreat. Though the emphasis on social application of the gospel continued, he saw "a new and wonderful emphasis on personal evangelism and a conversion experience." He declared the first step to revival to be an end to controversy among Christians. He charged:

The fighting, feuding and controversies among God's people, even within evangelical circles . . . is a very poor example to our governments. . . . [He was] absolutely sick and fed up with the controversies that rage among Christians, many times over non-essentials. Many of our controversies revolve around personality clashes; most of them are of the flesh and from the Devil, they could be avoided if all of our lives were Spirit-filled. . . . I am determined by God's grace that I am going to stay out of these controversies and divisions among God's people and continue to preach Christ and Him crucified to sinful men. . . . we as Christians should love each other, even though we have strong differences.⁷

This would be the high ground which the defenders of Graham would occupy during most of the dispute. Because of Graham's extreme personal

popularity, he could assume a position above the battle, speaking out against controversy generally, even at the time when his program of ecumenical evangelism was generating the widest controversy the conservative camp had experienced in the century. He would hold all the advantages. Despite the fact that it was he who was challenging accepted positions, the onus of raising controversy would rest on his accusers. By pleading for the end of controversy, he was in fact asking for the acceptance of his position. He could attack his accusers as divisive trouble-makers and only rarely address the issues which they raised. At the same time, he would consistently maintain the pose of never defending himself against critics. This advantage he used fully in the following comments:

God cannot bless us if there are divisions, fighting and strife within the church. How many churches we hear about today that are filled with divisions, jealousy, revenge, spite, pride. How can God possibly bless a situation like that?

Pastors and Christians need to repent of the sins of strife, controversy and fighting. I tell you, this is not of God.

Many people wonder why revival has not come to the evangelicals of America. This is one of the primary reasons. We have had enough name-calling and mud-slinging. Let's repent of our sins, fall on our faces before God and spend the time in prayer that we used to spend in controversy and see what happens. I guarantee God will send us a revival.⁸

Thus Graham could make a lofty appeal for peace in the church, accuse his critics of name-calling and mud-slinging, ask for the acceptance of ecumenical evangelism, and question the motives of his attackers; all without leaving the high ground above the battle. Turning to the upcoming New York campaign he made specific application of this pacific principle.

He first pointed out the extreme minority position of the Protestant community in New York City. He referred to "deep cleavages among

the Christians of New York City." The picture was one of a besieged minority who could not afford the divisions which existed among them. Fundamentalists would not accept any such picture but would insist that the minority position of true Christians was even more extreme than that painted by Graham. The fundamentalists would insist that their position would be greatly harmed, rather than helped, by being joined with the non-evangelical groups. When asked about the sponsorship of the meetings, Graham replied, "What difference does it make who sponsors a meeting?" He then suggested that Paul was sponsored at Mars Hill by the Stoics and Epicureans and that Christ preached in a synagogue. He declared his intention to "continue to go wherever I am invited." The question of liberal sponsorship in ecumenical evangelistic endeavors would become the focal point of the struggle between fundamentalism and the new evangelicalism, and the campaign of the new evangelicals to force the acceptance of ecumenical evangelism would eventually push the fundamentalists into even greater isolation. Donald Grey Barnhouse reported in Eternity the following month a meeting with Graham and commented that both he and Graham were "grieved at the attitude that has been taken by some prominent Fundamentalist leaders against Dr. Graham." Barnhouse thought it "extraordinary that some people would hold that the gospel may not be preached in the greatest city of the world unless it is under the auspices of which they approve."⁹

That the position of conservative evangelicals with regard to separation would not be easily changed was indicated by a letter to Christian Life by Joseph T. Bayly, editor of the magazine of the Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship. Bayly was not convinced by Graham's

arguments and suggested the crux of the matter to be whether Paul turned the names of converts over to "non-believing synagogues."¹⁰ Other evangelicals also remained "disturbed" about non-orthodox sponsorship of evangelistic meetings, and the attack of the fundamentalists was just beginning.

In December of 1956 the Sword of the Lord printed a sermon by Bob Jones which had been preached in October on his seventy-third birthday.¹¹ In the sermon, titled "After 58 Years of Evangelism," he warned of the consequences which would follow wide acceptance of ecumenical evangelism by conservative churches. Jones first declared, "I have never knowingly conducted any revival under the sponsorship of any pastor or pastors who deny the generally accepted fundamentals of the faith." He placed his own ministry and that of Bob Jones University thoroughly inside the stream of interdenominational fundamentalism. He stated:

I learned from my experiences that all of the orthodox, Bible-believing Christians stand together on certain fundamental doctrinal truths. These truths are the inspiration of the Bible, the virgin birth, the incarnation, the vicarious blood atonement, the bodily resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, the necessity of the new birth, and salvation by grace through faith. All orthodox Christians consider these the essential Christian doctrines. There are, of course, other doctrinal positions that some of the preachers and churches held that they considered important; but they were not the fundamental essentials. So I made up my mind that the school I would found would be one built on the essentials so that any orthodox parent . . . could send his or her son or daughter to the institution and could go to sleep at night, knowing that his or her child would come away strong in all the essentials of the faith.

He characterized the university as a "base for orthodoxy," sending out preachers and teachers who would stand for these truths in opposition to all other positions. He spoke of a "strange, very pious-talking movement in America."

It is the neo-orthodox movement. It is deceiving the people and is more dangerous than outspoken modernism, for it talks very pious. It talks about the new birth, about Jesus being the only solution to human problems. Yet while talking about these things, it is leading orthodox Bible believers into the camp of the modernists, who have the tools in hand and are trying to dig up the foundation doctrines of the Christian faith.

Recently, a certain supposedly evangelistic magazine carried an article saying in effect that fundamentalism has changed its emphasis from "you must contend for the faith" to "you must be born again." From my experience in the ministry for sixty years, I can tell you frankly that I have never read a more subtly dangerous statement. Paul said that if anybody preached any Gospel except what he preached let him be anathema. . . . Paul said he was set for the defense of the Gospel. A man who believes the Gospel will defend the Gospel and fight any effort to dilute the Gospel or to pervert this Gospel in any way.¹²

Jones had completely rejected the thesis of the new evangelicals that the movement of the denominations away from liberalism to neo-orthodoxy represented an opportunity for orthodoxy to regain its central position. He saw instead the danger to "Bible-believing" groups which would come from re-involvement with the still non-orthodox Protestant establishment. Whatever might be said of neo-orthodox theologians, they were still far from the orthodox position which Jones defined as the ground of evangelical cooperation. He challenged the optimism then current in evangelical circles, insisting that there was no substance to the "revival of religion" in America. The great interest in the church and religion, which was a marked feature of the decade, was to Jones shallow and even counterfeit. He pointed out what critics from other perspectives would also see: that the "interest in religion" made little distinction between the kinds of religion. Martin Marty's work criticizing "religion in general" would point to many of the deficiencies here noticed by Jones.¹³ Revealing the tremendous differences in viewpoint which had developed between the evangelicals and the fundamentalists, Jones finally warned:

It is my honest, sincere opinion that America is in the worst spiritual condition it has ever been in my lifetime; and if orthodox Christians do not stand up and fight for the fundamentals of the Christian faith and urge the orthodox, Bible-believing Christians not to go along officially and personally in religious movements with the neo-orthodox and modernist crowd, we are going to live to see the foundations upon which our forefathers built the organized Christian churches in America completely destroyed in a spiritual way.¹⁴

Contrasted to the view of Jones, the evangelicals painted an optimistic picture, indeed. James DeForest Murch, one of the most cautious evangelical observers, felt that there had "never been a more favorable attitude on the part of the masses to biblical Christianity." At the same time he warned that millions of those "flocking into the liberal churches" had little or no "concept of what it means to be a real, born-again Christian."¹⁵ Murch was typical of many evangelicals who felt the optimism of the hour and urged their fellows to take advantage of the wider opportunities for influence, but who yet had serious misgivings about cooperation with non-orthodox churchmen. As an official of the National Association of Evangelicals he would naturally reflect the pressures of institutional competition with the National Council of Churches. Spokesmen of the NAE increasingly drew a distinction between cooperation with non-orthodox clergymen in an enterprise such as the Graham crusades and "structural or organizational" affiliation, which they considered dangerous.¹⁶ The officials of the NAE were usually more cautious than the journalistic and academic-oriented new evangelicals. Institutional competition had taught the NAE men that the claim that liberalism was dead was not entirely accurate. They were not nearly as prone to accept neo-orthodox and neo-liberal theologians without careful examination of their exact

views. Murch would often warn evangelicals of the dangers which indiscriminate fellowship posed to theological integrity. Nonetheless, the NAE in most minds came to represent the new evangelical position. The fundamentalists attacked it as such, and the new evangelicals claimed it as such.¹⁷ And certainly the NAE was carried along by the general optimism which prevailed in much of the conservative camp as a result of being given national attention for the first time in twenty-five years.

In January of 1957 Christianity Today printed a defense of Graham written by W. K. Harrison, a well known evangelical, an army general, and a contributing editor of the magazine.¹⁸ Harrison first agreed that the sponsors of the New York campaign would be largely unsaved, modernist church leaders. He then pictured them as desperate because of the failure of liberalism over the years to produce the results, in terms of better morality and environment, that they had sought. They were now willing to turn to Graham for help, though they did not believe the gospel which he preached. He asked: "If these modernist groups invite Mr. Graham to preach the Gospel to them and offer to support it with money, effort and prayer, should he refuse?" Harrison felt the answer to be obvious. He then considered verses which fundamentalists cited as prohibiting any such association with modernists. Several he found to be irrelevant to the situation of ecumenical evangelism, but then he based his main discussion of the issues on II Corinthians 6:14-17. He judged that the separation from unbelievers demanded could not be total segregation--other Bible passages presumed believers to be living in contact with unbelievers--and must therefore

be separation of a "special character." "Unequally" was said to be the governing word in the paragraph, and Harrison concluded, ". . . If we are yoked or associated with unbelievers in objectives, purposes, methods or actions which are contrary to God's will, commanded or character, in other words, which are sinful, the yoke is unequal and must be avoided." By shifting the meaning of the verse from the nature of the associates to the objectives of the association, Harrison had denied it any relevance to the New York campaign, which all conservatives would agree had a worthy purpose. Harrison's treatment of the passage was too ingenious, however, and other evangelicals would offer explanations which just as effectively precluded any application to ecumenical evangelism, but which did not demand as much of the interpreter.

Other of Harrison's comments reveal an important, and rarely admitted, aspect of the evangelical approach to non-evangelicals in ecumenical evangelism. His comments are here included in greater length than the influence of Harrison would warrant, because they reveal a mental device through which countless evangelicals maintained their "theological purity" while cooperating with the most unorthodox of non-evangelicals:

The desire of and consequent invitation by the Protestant modernists to receive Mr. Graham's ministry is certainly to be desired in the interest of saving men's souls. . . . The use of unbelievers' money to pay the necessary expenses of the meetings which they themselves seek seems logical and legitimate to me. That modernists may be on the committee or sit on the platform are not in themselves evil, as I see it. I believe any real believer would welcome an invitation to preach the true Gospel to the pastor and unsaved people in a modernist church. . . . Yet, if one accepts such an invitation, he does so from the pastor of the church, and that pastor will sit on the platform and probably take part in the service.

There is in this no recognition of any yoke or Christian fellowship. . . . Now, I see little difference other than in magnitude between the preaching of the Gospel in a single

modernist church and in New York by Billy Graham.

. . . I think we must all recognize that God has saved many, many persons and multitudes have received the true witness through the ministry of Mr. Graham. . . . I simply cannot see how such a movement and salvation could be of Satan, which it must be if it is not of God. . . .

[Though Graham did not guide converts in the selection of a church] I agree with him that the Sovereign God is able to keep His own and to finish that which He has begun. Who knows that converts who go to a modernist church may not be God's witnesses in that church until such time as they leave it or are expelled?¹⁹ [Emphasis added]

According to Harrison, representation on the committees of the crusade, recognition from the public platform of the revival meetings, and participation in the services implied no recognition of Christian fellowship. The acceptance of modernist sponsorship was a calculated matter related to securing the financial and institutional backing for the meetings. This was the attitude of many evangelicals, but rarely was it so baldly stated. The modernists are spoken of as generally unbelievers, and despite all appearance there was to be no real fellowship with them. It is significant that Harrison speaks of preaching in a modernist church to the pastor and not with the pastor. That the attitude of Harrison was widespread among evangelicals can hardly be doubted. Had it been more manifest at the upper reaches of evangelical leadership, the program of ecumenical evangelism would have ground to a halt. Certainly, nothing which issued from the Graham organization acknowledged the mental reservations which were here indicated.

The Fifteenth Annual Convention of the National Association of Evangelicals was held in April of 1957 in Buffalo, New York, and Billy Graham there identified himself fully with the new evangelicalism and called upon the organization to repudiate fundamentalism. Without naming any individuals, Graham first suggested his critics were not

enough concerned for the salvation of the lost: "Where are the tears for the lost? Where is our concern for men that are confused, frustrated, lost, sinful and destined for hell? At the present, our New York campaign has been challenged by some extremists on two points." Graham then stated his position clearly for the first time:

First, as to its sponsorship, I would like to make myself quite clear. I intend to go anywhere, sponsored by anybody, to preach the Gospel of Christ, if there are no strings attached to my message. I am sponsored by civic clubs, universities, ministerial associations and councils of churches all over the world. I intend to continue. Not one person in New York has even suggested or hinted as to what my message should be. It will be precisely the same message that I have preached all over the world. The centrality of my message will be Christ and Him crucified.

Second, we have been challenged on what happens to the converts when the crusade is over. Apparently these brethren who make these statements have no faith in the Holy Spirit. The work of regeneration is the work of the Holy Spirit. The work of follow up is the work of the Holy Spirit. The same Holy Spirit that convicted them of sin and regenerated them is able to follow them. No group of ministers in any large city anywhere in the world agrees on what constitutes a sound church. We do all we can in follow up, but ultimately they're in the hands of the Holy Spirit.²⁰

Graham had left no room for misunderstanding. He intended to work with the established churches and with every theological element within them. He had rejected the conservative evangelical notion that there were sound, orthodox churches and unsound, non-orthodox churches, and instead he asserted that there was no consensus on what constitutes a sound church. Certainly among the group to which he was speaking there was such a consensus. The general membership of the NAE would have defined an orthodox position much as Bob Jones had in his October, 1956, sermon.²¹ The concept that there was difficulty in distinguishing sound from unsound churches was not one which evangelicals would seriously consider. The comments which we have quoted from

Harrison assuredly reflect confidence that modernist churches could be identified. Nonetheless, Graham's remarks would be subjected to careful, public scrutiny only by the fundamentalists. Most agreed with Graham, that the doctrine of separation must not be allowed to interfere with the tremendous opportunity for preaching the gospel, and though nearly all evangelicals were loathe to see the converts turned over to liberal churches, they understood that without the participation of the non-orthodox churches, the campaigns would be much less successful.

At Buffalo, Graham also presented the new evangelical interpretation of the current theological situation, coupled with the by-now-usual new evangelical exaltation of love over orthodoxy. He stated:

The one badge of Christian discipleship is not orthodoxy, but love. There is far more emphasis on love and unity among God's people in the New Testament than there is on orthodoxy, as important as it is.

We evangelicals sometimes set ourselves up as judges of another man's relationship to God. We often think that a person is not a Christian unless he pronounces our shibboleths and cliches exactly the way we do. I have found born again Christians in the strangest places, under the oddest circumstances, who do not know our particular evangelical language. But their spirit witnesses to my spirit that they are truly sons of God. There is a great swing all over the world, within the church, toward a more conservative theological position. The old terms, fundamentalism and liberalism, are now passe. The situation has radically changed, since the days of Machen, Riley and other defenders of the faith a generation ago.²²

Graham had made the new evangelical position fully his own. He had directly challenged the remaining fundamentalist influence within evangelicalism. The point of no return had been reached. Ecumenical evangelism would be the issue over which the struggle would be made, but the entire new evangelical program furnished the background. That no standard of soundness in a church existed, that the tests of orthodoxy had become mere shibboleths, that love had an existence apart

from fidelity to Scripture, were assertions that always before had come from the liberals. Increasingly, fundamentalists would find themselves arguing points they had long contested against the liberals, and the new evangelicals would accuse the fundamentalists with charges of which they had long been the targets. The difference was that now both sides readily admitted the other to rightly be included in the body of Christ. The fundamentalists had always denied that position to the modernists. Perhaps, this only made the struggle more bitter. It had many characteristics of a family disturbance, or of a civil war.

NOTES

CHAPTER 11

¹Cornelius Van Til, The New Modernism (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1947).

²United Evangelical Action, September 15, 1957, pp. 17-18.

³Jerry Beavan letter to Robert Ketchum, dated April 20, 1951.

⁴Graham letter to Rice, dated May 10, 1952.

⁵Sword, June 17, 1956, XXII, 9.

⁶"What's the Next Step?" Christian Life, June, 1956, pp. 20-23.

⁷Ibid., p. 21.

⁸Ibid., p. 22.

⁹Eternity, July, 1956, p. 19.

¹⁰Christian Life, August, 1956, p. 4.

¹¹Bob Jones, Sr., "After 58 Years of Evangelism," Sword, December 7, 1956, XXII, 1, 8-10.

¹²Ibid.

¹³Martin E. Marty, "The Triumph of Religion-in-General," Christian Century, September 10, 1958, LXXV, 1016-1019.

¹⁴Jones, "After 58 Years," p. 9.

¹⁵United Evangelical Action, January 1, 1957, p. 5.

¹⁶Interview with Clyde Taylor, Washington, D.C., August, 1973.

¹⁷William E. Ashbrook, Evangelicalism: The New Neutralism (Columbus, Ohio: printed privately by Calvary Bible Church, 1970 ed.), p. 5.

¹⁸W. K. Harrison, "General Harrison Answers Graham Critics," Christianity Today, January 21, 1957, I, 28, 33.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 33.

²⁰Christianity Today, April 1, 1957, I, 26.

²¹See page 199-201.

²²Christianity Today, April 1, 1957, I, 26.

CHAPTER 12

THE DEEPENING CONTROVERSY

The fundamentalists were not slow in responding to Graham's Buffalo declaration. The April 19 issue of the Sword contained a lengthy article by Rice opposing the New York crusade.¹ The tone had considerably hardened since his article in November announcing the initial break with Graham. The April article directly challenged ecumenical sponsorship of evangelistic campaigns and was titled "Billy Graham's New York Crusade, Should Bible-Believers Yoke Up With Unbelievers in Revival Campaigns?" For a text, Rice gave the familiar verses, II John 7-11:

For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist. Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward. Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed; For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.

Rice showed no hesitation in applying these verses to the New York situation. He noted that the New York crusade would be "principally under the control of the Protestant Council, which is predominately modernistic, liberal, as its leaders openly profess." He described Graham's position in the following words: "It is all right to be sponsored by anybody saved or unsaved, for the Bible or against it,

just so it gives an opportunity to preach the Gospel." Rice charged:

. . . The argument is that very old one, that the end justifies the means, that orthodoxy is not so important as brotherly love, that one may get bigger crowds to preach the Gospel to if he does not refuse to associate with modernists.

On the other hand, old-time Bible-believing fundamentalists insist that the Bible clearly forbids yoking up with unbelievers, even though one's motives may appear to be good and that in the long run God's cause suffers when people disobey that plain command no matter what their motives. On the one hand the argument for yoking up with modernists in the New York campaign is the argument of expediency. On the other hand the argument is "thus saith the Lord," that to yoke up with unconverted people and enemies of the Gospel is clearly forbidden in the Bible.²

Rice then related the events which led to the break with Graham in April. He stressed his long support of the evangelist and his defense of Graham against the critics of evangelism. He urged his own continued devotion to the cause of evangelism:

As I pray daily for Dr. Billy Graham, I pray daily for many, many other evangelists. All I did for Dr. Billy Graham I did not for friendship's sake, but for Jesus Christ. I want to honor the dear Lord Jesus. I know that the thing dearest to His heart is soul winning. I know that evangelism is the primary aim of the church, the very heart of Christianity.

I am for evangelism and for evangelists, but of course I am for Christ and the Bible first of all. . . . To whatever degree evangelists and evangelism fail to follow the Bible pattern and to honor Christ and historic Christianity, to that degree my support and endorsement of that evangelist and evangelism are limited.³

His following comments revealed that in the future there would be opposition to the Graham campaigns, rather than any "limited support, and that despite the expression of love for Graham personally, the breach was now complete. He summarized his position, which was now that of fundamentalists generally:

The Sword of the Lord does not oppose Dr. Graham. We love him and pray for him. However, we think he is wrong when he goes against the plain commands of the Bible in yoking up with

unbelievers. We think that that kind of evangelism will do great harm and in the long run will lead more people away from God than it will get converted. Thus we cannot endorse the New York campaign, we do not think that Bible-believing Christians ought to support it officially or financially though we agree that they ought to pray for Dr. Graham.⁴

Rice then described the "Modernistic Backing of the New York Crusade," pointing out the presence on the sponsoring committee of such leading Protestants as Dr. Henry P. Van Dusen, president of Union Theological Seminary; Dr. Ralph Sockman, a leading Methodist spokesman; as well as Dr. John Sutherland Bonnell, pastor of the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church of New York City. Rice charged, "Of the 155 men and women on the general Crusade committee, only a small minority claim to be out-and-out Bible-believers and converted people and most are openly liberal." He warned conservative pastors that "the follow-up work of the campaign will be largely controlled by modernists." He complained that the National Association of Evangelicals had been "made a platform from which Dr. Graham has labeled all of us who disagree with the viewpoint of fellowshiping with unbelievers 'extremists.'" He warned fellow fundamentalists to avoid reckless charges about Graham or his message, insisting that there were no signs that what he preached would be other than the true gospel. Though he did not expect Graham to attack the modernists who invited him or to say anything to discredit Union Theological Seminary or the National Council of Churches, he did expect Graham to genuinely preach the gospel in New York. In concluding he asked, "Should Christians support Dr. Billy Graham's New York Crusade and his radio broadcast?" He answered that the modernists Van Dusen, Sockman, and Bonnell should indeed support the effort. "They invited Dr. Graham, they control the campaign. They will get most of the

results." That fundamentalist opposition to Graham was just beginning was evident, as Rice promised to trace in coming issues of the Sword of the Lord "the gradual evolution, the breaking down of convictions by a movement called 'the new evangelicalism.'" ⁵

The defense of ecumenical evangelism would be made in those magazines which had already become identified with the new evangelical movement. Barnhouse commented in Eternity that he was grieved because "true Christian brethren . . . are criticizing Billy and even writing and circulating scandalous untruths about him." He charged: "Billy's detractors use insidious means. They use half-truths and insinuations to draw false conclusions. They instill doubts in the minds of believers and stir up enmity among brethren. They cry out with loud voices that they are the true defenders of the faith; but the net result of their campaign proves that they are just the opposite." And later: ". . . The half dozen men who have banded together to attack Billy Graham give no evidence of being impelled by the love of Jesus Christ or led by the Holy Spirit." Rejecting the fundamentalist criticism that in New York, Graham would be associated with men who were not "fundamental," Barnhouse offered the following comparison of the two groups of believers in New York:

Both readily testify to their belief that Jesus Christ is God and that salvation is by the death of the Lord Jesus Christ. But one group does not adhere, for example, to the doctrine of eternal punishment. I take my stand against their position. The other group says, "We believe in the person and work of Christ," but they do not practice Christian love. Here I take my stand against their inconsistency. From all that I read in the Bible, it may go harder with the latter group at the judgment seat of Christ than with the former.⁶

This passage reflects Barnhouse's somewhat naive and patronizing approach to men of other theological positions and also indicates

another way in which evangelicals justified fellowship with groups they had previously shunned. Barnhouse always insisted that the non-orthodox churchmen with whom he was now involved were really converted men. He always understated the distance between their position and his own orthodoxy and placed great reliance upon personal contact and the "witness of their spirit with his spirit," refusing to take seriously their published opinions. He eventually came to narrow his criterion of fellowship to adherence to the deity of Christ, and even this was interpreted rather loosely. His report of an interview with G. Bromley Oxnam revealed the extent to which he was able to blind himself to the differences of belief between himself and one whom he wished to make the object of his expanding fellowship.⁷

Realizing the strength of the separatist appeal to many evangelicals, the Graham organization expanded its campaign for the new evangelicalism and issued many specific refutations of the fundamentalist version of the doctrine of separation. One of these was a defense of Graham which appeared in Christian Life and was written by Paul Rees, a past president of the National Association of Evangelicals and a close Graham supporter.⁸ Rees offered a varied defense, but the main points followed the lines already developed. Rees' primary complaint was directed toward the application of the slogans of the controversies of the previous generation. Modernist and fundamentalist had both been wrong; the battle-lines on theological 'musts' had been made longer than could be biblically justified, with fine points of eschatology serving as tests of orthodoxy. That Graham had considerably streamlined the test was revealed when Rees provided the information that

Graham demanded only that the members of the executive committee believe in the deity and the atonement of Christ. Nonetheless, in the following veiled words, Rees hinted that Graham's cooperation with these non-orthodox clergymen might be somewhat less than sincere.

"And don't forget that Graham may grieve as heartily as anyone over unfortunate happenings or situations arising in connection with his work. Outsiders do not know how many matters he personally corrects and brings into line." Rees offered a specific defense of Bonnell's presence on the executive committee. The famous Bonnell article on non-orthodox views within the Presbyterian church was implied, though not said, to represent views to which he did not personally subscribe. No very careful discussion of Bonnell's theological position would be made at any time during the crusade; he had been a major figure in securing the backing of the Protestant Council.

Rees made a direct challenge to the opposition of Rice, indicating the pivotal position which Rice was considered to occupy among fundamentalists. He quoted a passage from How To Have A Revival, a book published by Rice ten years before, which seemed to indicate approval of modernist sponsorship in revival campaigns. He quoted Rice:

When pastors plan for a union revival campaign and ask me if some pastor who is reputed to be rather modernistic shall be invited to join . . . I answer that if such a pastor and people are willing to hear my kind of preaching against sin; my kind of preaching of the infallible Word of God; on the deity of Christ; on His atoning death . . . then by all means encourage them to come.⁹

Rice soon published an answer to the Rees article, charging him with taking the passage out of context and misrepresenting the situation in New York. He declared that the fundamentalist-modernist controversy

was not, in the past or then, concerned with minor points of difference on eschatology. He charged that Rees had failed to face up to the real issue and had not informed his readers of the true nature of the sponsorship in New York. He wrote:

It is not a difference on some "fine points regarding the Second Coming of Christ." It is not the failure of Dr. Ralph Sockman, Dr. Henry Van Dusen of Union Theological Seminary and Dr. John S. Bonnell to "assent to a 'pre-tribulational rapture'" that makes good, Bible-believing Christians take offense. It is rather the denial of the virgin birth, the denial of the verbal inspiration of the Bible, the denial of the blood atonement, the denial of the historic Christian faith in its absolute essentials!

The fundamentalist-modernist controversy has never been centered on the pre-tribulation rapture or fine points of the Second Coming.¹⁰

His complaint about the passage from his book which Rees had quoted was that the paragraph before specifically limited the acceptable sponsorship to Bible-believing churches. He claimed that the impact of the total discussion was that if men were wrong in certain areas but right on the essentials, they could be allowed to participate, but even then they should only be invited to participate, not given a hand in running the campaign. That Rice had taken a consistent position on the sponsorship appropriate to union revivals is evident in his published comments on the subject over the last twenty-five years. He had defined the "fellowship" as had Bob Jones in his sermon, "After 58 Years," which is discussed in the previous chapter.¹² The only serious question in fundamentalist circles had related to those who were pentecostal or very strongly Arminian, and Rice had taken the generally accepted fundamentalist position that they should be invited if they made no issue over their distinctive doctrinal beliefs. The qualification that any invited would have to listen to "my kind of preaching" was also a

far more real limitation with Rice than it would be with Graham. Rice pointed out that he had not merely said "Gospel preaching," but had specifically said "my kind of preaching against sin." Strong denunciation of modernism, liberalism, neo-orthodoxy, or any other variation from rigorous orthodoxy would make any modernist sponsorship of Rice most unlikely, and such careful distinguishing of orthodoxy from these "false theologies" would make up some part of Rice's preaching in every revival effort. Rice concluded by a review of the passages to which fundamentalists pointed as the biblical basis for separatism.

The next month Rice broadened the attack on Graham and in an article titled "Billy Graham Openly Repudiates Fundamentalism," reviewed the entire background of the division.¹³ Rice began: "For some time Dr. Graham's friends and associates and spokesmen have been speaking critically of fundamentalists and fundamentalism. That has been true of Christianity Today, of Christian Life magazine, of Dr. Paul Rees, Dr. Carl Henry, Dr. Bernard Ramm, Dr. Vernon Grounds, and others." He first pointed out that Graham had entered into controversy against the fundamentalists, though he had always been very careful to avoid anything that might give offense to any other group. He reported that often Graham and the Graham organization had asked his assistance in correcting some misunderstanding or in defending some policy which Graham had followed. He said: "Always the general impression was that he himself must never stain his hands in controversy, though he wanted some of the rest of us to do it, and to defend him in the press." Rice noted that Graham had never been critical of Roman Catholicism, that he had never spoken out against "false cults" such as

Christian Science, and that he avoided controversy with the modernists. Complained Rice, "The only ones that he does not mind offending are Bible believers." He resented Graham's statement at Buffalo that the NAE was at the crossroads and must avoid the extremes of diluted faith or fundamentalism. Rice then made a charge that explained the bitterness and intensity of the struggle and revealed why fundamentalists were not content to quietly withhold participation in the crusades without entering into public controversy over ecumenical evangelism. Rice charged:

Dr. Graham is one of the spokesmen, and perhaps the principal spark plug of a great drift away from strict Bible fundamentalism and strict defense of the faith.

There is such a drift. There have been many, many evidences of it. There have been many spokesmen for the movement in the last few years.¹⁴

The optimism in the fundamentalist camp, which had been stirred by the resurgence of evangelism in the forties and pushed higher as a fundamentalist evangelist again captured the headlines of the national press, had turned to bitter disappointment as they saw the evangelist become the chief spokesman of a movement which to them seemed determined to eliminate the distinctives for which they had contended throughout the century. The more the new evangelicals tried to make fundamentalist theology acceptable to the broader community by what they considered minor concessions, the more the fundamentalists resented their efforts. And Billy Graham became the symbol of their resentment. Far from leading a new fundamentalist crusade against the leaders of modern, heterodox religion, Graham had united with those leaders and was making the same charges against fundamentalism which they had long made. He was leading a crusade, not against the

modernists, but against the fundamentalists. The controversy over his Buffalo address and over the New York crusade would cut the last ties which fundamentalism had with the broader church.

Rice again reviewed many of the events which have been discussed in this study and added some comments concerning Graham's relationships which further increase our understanding of the split which had developed. In a section headed "Dr. Graham's Friendship Has Continually Tended to Avoid Out-and-Out Fundamentalists and Favor Compromisers," Rice candidly discussed Graham's longstanding preference for the company of non-fundamentalists. He began:

I do not believe that men need to drift. I think that Dr. Billy Graham has drifted in his alignment, in his friendships, because he puts himself in the company of compromisers. He avoided the fellowship of those who stood the truest. Here I speak with real pain, as what I must say will grieve my friend Dr. Graham. But it should be said.

He then related Graham's friendship with Charles Templeton, the evangelist who, through attendance at Princeton Theological Seminary, had been moved from orthodoxy and eventually left the ministry. He was critical of Graham for publicly maintaining his friendship with Templeton, announcing it "particularly when he was in the presence of modernists." Rice then reported that during campaigns throughout the United States, in cities "where there has been a strong out-and-out testimony, a tremendous soul winner, Dr. Graham has tended to play down the good soul winner and particularly to run with denominational leaders." Rice complained that in Chattanooga, where Dr. Lee Roberson built the Highland Park Baptist Church, Graham would from the campaign platform often refer "to his golf game with the First Methodist pastor, or to some fellowship with the First Baptist pastor who was a

denominational leader, but little was said about the far greatest church in town with about the most tremendous soul-winning program in the world." Rice characterized the Mid-City Baptist Church of New Orleans as "by far the greatest soul-winning church in the area" but reported that during the crusade there, "the boon companion of Dr. Graham and the one to whom he often referred from the pulpit was not the pastor of the great soul-winning church, but the cigarette-smoking pastor who had been president of the Southern Baptist Convention and had the most prestige in denominational matters and matters in city leadership." Rice related feelings which other fundamentalists must have shared as he wrote:

I love Dr. Graham. I have prayed for him devotedly for years. . . . I have answered his enemies, his critics. I have excused his mistakes. I have urged everybody to pray for him. I find no pleasure in the fact that all along I have known he preferred the fellowship of others who did not fight sin so hard and did not take such a plain stand against modernism.¹⁵

Finally Rice asked, "The hard words that Dr. Billy Graham says about fundamentalists--to whom do they apply?" He first rejected the notion that Graham's criticisms were meant only for McIntire and the American Council. Even in doing so, it was clear that the dispute had pushed all of fundamentalism closer to McIntire. Rice declared, "Dr. McIntire believes exactly what all the rest of us fundamentalists believe." Rice wanted to make it clear that this was not a battle which McIntire faced alone.

When Dr. Billy Graham urged the National Association of Evangelicals that they must take a middle course, avoiding "the extreme fundamentalists which God has bypassed," he did not mean that the National Association of Evangelicals was about to follow Carl McIntire. No, he meant that the National Association of Evangelicals had better beware not to be strongly fundamental or argumentative about the faith.

Who then does Dr. Billy Graham impugn when he says that God has bypassed extreme fundamentalists?¹⁶

Rice then attempted to enlist every fundamentalist and conservative evangelical who had not already sided with Graham, and some who had, in the campaign against Graham. He indicated that Graham's remarks had the widest possible reference. Many of the institutions and individuals which he listed as targets of Graham's criticism would come out of the division on the side of the evangelist, and others would try with great difficulty to remain out of the controversy. Some, such as Bob Jones University, the General Association of Regular Baptist Churches, and the Temple Baptist Church of Detroit, were included quite appropriately. Others, such as Charles Fuller, of the "Old Fashioned Revival Hour" and the founder of Fuller Theological Seminary, and Dr. Theodore Epp should have obviously been left out, as they were strong defenders of Graham. Several, such as Moody Bible Institute and the Bible Institute of Los Angeles (now Biola College), would long try to remain friendly with both sides but would eventually move closer to the new evangelicals. Whatever position they took in the controversy, the conservative institutions Rice had listed, and many he failed to list, such as Dallas Theological Seminary and countless bible colleges across the country, would not escape the effects of the division. The months ahead would see a realignment among conservative evangelicals. Many old friendships would be broken, and some new ones formed.

At the end of May, 1957, the Sword printed a critique of the new evangelicalism which had been written by William Ashbrook, a fundamentalist pastor in Columbus, Ohio, and an American Council spokesman. He charged that the movement represented a "new neutralism," which sought

to be neither fish nor fowl but wished to sit out the great theological battle of the day. Wrote Ashbrook:

Bible-believing Christians would do well to beware of this New Neutralism for four valid reasons. First, it is a movement born of compromise. Second, it is a movement nurtured on pride of intellect. Third, it is a movement growing on appeasement of evil. And finally, it is a movement doomed by the judgment of God's Holy Word.¹⁷

In June, Rice acknowledged that some subscriptions had been canceled because of his stand against the ecumenical evangelism practiced by Graham, but he only renewed his attack.¹⁸ Another June article rejoined in the souls saved during the New York crusade but was largely devoted to criticism of the basis of the crusade.¹⁹ Still another article during that month charged, "Ecumenical Evangelism: Union, at the Expense of Truth, Is Treason."²⁰ The article was written by fundamentalist evangelist James A. Stewart, then of Asheville, North Carolina, and warned that evangelical Christianity was being "wedded to modernism." Stewart labeled neo-orthodoxy "a subtle device of Satan to woo into compromise the evangelical element." He declared:

The enemy has scored a great victory in breaking down the separation barriers between liberals and evangelicals. It is astounding to see an outstanding modernistic minister and an outstanding evangelical preaching from the same platform. In this unholy compromise, nothing is said against the modernists, who deny the very faith of the Gospel which is being preached.

Again the difference in the experiences of the new evangelicals and the fundamentalists was reflected as Stewart complained:

... This compromise is a slap in the face to every evangelical pastor who has sacrificed all the years to maintain a pure evangelical testimony in his city, town, or village. Some of these blessed men were ousted out of high influential churches and saw their wives and children suffer in many ways through their uncompromising stand. Any evangelist who unites with the present-day Philistines insults the wisdom and integrity of these men who have poured out their life's blood for the faith once delivered to the saints.²¹

In the same issue, Bob Jones, Sr., was quoted:

Any evangelist that goes into a city under a ministerial union where the pastors do not belong to the little fundamental groups that still believe in the virgin birth, he will be selling evangelism down the river and will be a party to a great crime against God's faithful, uncompromising, orthodox, evangelical Christians who are trying to hold in these communities a base of testimony.²²

In July the Sword carried an article by Robert Ketcham, long time leader of the General Association of Regular Baptist Churches, which analyzed Graham's Buffalo speech and was strongly critical of Graham.²³ The same issue carried a notice that the Carolina Baptist Fellowship, a small group of fundamentalist churches in that area, had repudiated ecumenical evangelism and called upon Graham to reverse his direction.²⁴

Dr. Richard Clearwaters, president of the Central Conservative Baptist Theological Seminary, reinforced his earlier criticism of new evangelicalism with an article which was printed in the September issue of the Sword.²⁵ This Minneapolis seminary would make criticism of new evangelicalism a major part of its ministry.

The religious controversy became more and more a bitter personal dispute. In October, John R. Rice reported strong efforts of the new evangelicals to discredit the fundamentalist critics, particularly Dr. Bob Jones, Sr.²⁶ Rice called these efforts a "smear scheme." He first noted that the biography of Graham which had been published the year before, written by Stanley High, had been most uncomplimentary toward Bob Jones University.²⁷ By implication at least, the work suggested that the school was a place of "religious bigotry," anti-intellectualism, and oppressive narrowness. Moody Monthly, a magazine very favorable toward Graham, had complained that the treatment accorded

this "highly respected evangelical college" was "the most unpardonable item in the whole book."²⁸ Rice then related the strong pressures which had been put upon Bob Jones University to secure permission for a rally at the university in behalf of the New York crusade. Bob Jones had refused permission for any such rally, and it was widely, though falsely, reported in the evangelical press that he had forbade any student to pray for Billy Graham. Dr. L. Nelson Bell, father-in-law of Graham and founder of Christianity Today, entered the fray, circulating a series of letters accusing Jones of jealousy, bigotry, and a pharisaical spirit. At the same time a student of the university had been expelled, and his disaffection from the philosophy of the school became an issue. He had attempted to promote the Graham organization in New York. Bell took up the defense of the student and circulated letters in which the student attacked the administration of Bob Jones University. Two members of the co-operating board of the school joined the Graham camp, and Bell circulated letters written by them. One of these board members had been a strong critic of Carl McIntire and an enthusiastic supporter of the National Association of Evangelicals. The effect of the Graham issue in moving the independent fundamentalists closer to McIntire and further from the broader church was reflected in the defection of this board member and the subsequent ill feeling between him and the university. The dispute was eliminating the possibility of cordial relations with both the NAE and the ACC and causing many evangelicals to be hesitant to associate with either group. Rice considered the attack on Bob Jones University "an attack on all of us who stand out-and-out without apology for the Christian faith," an "attack on all who

are still willing to be called fundamentalists and to contend for the faith as we are commanded to do."²⁹

The conflict over the new evangelicalism was having wide effect in conservative circles. Numerous denominations showed signs of the struggle. In the Conservative Baptist Association the new evangelicals centered around the Conservative Baptist Theological Seminary in Denver. Vernon Grounds was now its president. Opposition to the new evangelicals and to Graham centered in the Central Conservative Baptist Theological Seminary in Minneapolis, headed by Richard Clearwaters, and in the activities of G. Archer Weniger and the San Francisco Conservative Baptist Theological Seminary. At the Los Angeles convention of the Conservative Baptists in 1957, Dr. William F. Kerr, a strong fundamentalist, repudiated the new evangelical criticisms of fundamentalism in a message titled "The Dangerous Trends in Modern Evangelicalism Which Encourage Apostasy." He directly challenged the substitution of the term evangelical for the more rigorous fundamentalist label.³⁰ In all conservative evangelical circles, Christians were being called upon to make a difficult choice.

In the Methodist Challenge, a paper he had long edited, fundamentalist Robert Shuler referred to Graham's Buffalo speech and agreed that the National Association of Evangelicals stood at the crossroads but urged that the fundamentalist direction be taken. Shuler warned that "friendly co-existence between a modified fundamentalism and a lovely and loving one-world liberalism" was a sign of the apostasy that would come in the end time.³¹

An event of October, 1957, further revealed the tension building in conservative circles. The Dallas Baptist Association, the local

Southern Baptist church affiliate, ousted two fundamentalist churches from its membership. The basis of the ejection was failure to use common sense in donations to missions. Jack Hyles, pastor of the Miller Road Baptist Church, the larger of the two churches, reported to John R. Rice that his church supported twenty-seven foreign missionaries and gave \$200 per month to the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board. The Miller Road Church had grown to 3,200 members in the five years of its existence and for the past two years had led the Southern Baptist Convention in the number of converts baptized into the church fellowship. The background of the dispute was therefore similar to that which caused the ouster of the Highland Park Baptist Church from the Chattanooga Baptist group.³² The independent spirit and aggressive temper of the fundamentalist was a threat to the smooth-running denominational machinery. Hyles's background was solidly Southern Baptist, and he had been received in many Southern Baptist circles. Three years before, he had been a speaker at numerous state-wide functions, but denominational leaders were increasingly considering support of the Cooperative Program a criterion of membership in the denomination, and Hyles and other fundamentalist Baptists would find less and less acceptance in Southern Baptist circles. These controversies added bitterness to the dispute with the new evangelicals and with Graham. In March of the following year Rice reported that Dr. Duke K. McCall, president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky, had called for the destruction of two kinds of religion, fundamentalism and liberalism.³³

By early 1958 the division was well under way, and many conservative evangelical institutions had chosen one side or the other. Some

continued to resist identification with either side in the dispute and hoped that the controversy might yet be avoided. In the coming months any neutral position would be increasingly difficult to maintain, and pressure from both sides would be exerted. Many evangelicals continued, nonetheless, to support the ecumenical evangelism of Graham and repudiated the rest of the program of the new evangelicalism. The fundamentalists insisted that these two issues be kept together and, in doing so, accepted a serious disadvantage in the struggle against the new evangelicals.

NOTES

CHAPTER 12

¹Rice, "Billy Graham's New York Crusade," Sword, April 19, 1957, XXIII, 2, 6-8.

²Ibid, p. 2.

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid., p. 7.

⁵Ibid., p. 8.

⁶Eternity, May, 1957, p. 7.

⁷Eternity, October, 1953, p. 8.

⁸Paul Rees, "What About the Criticism?" Christian Life, April, 1957, pp. 14-16.

⁹Rice, How To Have A Revival (Wheaton, Illinois: Sword of the Lord, 1946).

¹⁰Rice, "Dr. Rees Defends Billy's Unequal Yoke," Sword, April 26, 1957, XXIII, 7.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²See page 199-201.

¹³Rice, "Billy Graham Openly Repudiates Fundamentalism," Sword, May 17, 1957, XXIII, 2, 10-12.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 2.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 11.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 12.

¹⁷William E. Ashbrook, "New Evangelicalism: The New Neutralism," Sword, May 31, 1957, XXIII, 2-4.

¹⁸Sword, June 7, 1957, XXIII, 4.

¹⁹Rice, "Souls Saved in Billy Graham's New York Crusade," Sword, XXIII, 1-4.

²⁰James Stewart, "Ecumenical Evangelism," Sword, June 28, 1957, XXIII, 1, 4, 8.

²¹Ibid., p. 8.

²²Sword, June 28, 1957, XXIII, 4.

²³Robert T. Ketchum, "Billy Graham Finally Admits His Position," Sword, July 5, 1957, XXIII, 2, 10.

²⁴Sword, July 5, 1957, XXIII, 2.

²⁵Richard V. Clearwaters, "Double Divisiveness of the New Evangelicalism" Sword, September 6, 1957, XXIII, 1, 5.

²⁶Rice, "The Smear Scheme That Failed," Sword, October 11, 1957, XXIII, 1, 10-12.

²⁷Stanley High, Billy Graham (New York: McGraw Hill, 1956).

²⁸Sword, October 11, 1957, XXIII, 11; citing Moody Monthly, November, 1956, p. 23.

²⁹Rice, "Smear Scheme," pp. 10-12.

³⁰Sword, October 25, 1957, XXIII, 4.

³¹Sword, December 27, 1957, XXIII, 3.

³²See pages 153-156.

³³Sword, March 28, 1958, XXIV, 6.

CHAPTER 13

THE NEW THEOLOGICAL ALIGNMENT

The tightening lines of division were indicated early in 1958. The significance of the New York campaign had been understood by many in the conservative camp, and many were ready to take a position in the struggle. A group of fundamentalist evangelists met and constructed a document criticizing the ecumenical evangelism of Graham and pledging themselves to refuse any mixed sponsorship. The statement read in part:

. . . I pledge myself that I will not accept a church meeting on the invitation of any pastor that I know does not stand for the inspiration of the Bible, the Virgin Birth, . . . I will not accept an invitation from any group of pastors if I know there is one in the group that does not believe in the fundamentals outlined in the preceding paragraph. . . . I further pledge myself not to personally support financially or encourage anyone else to support any program of any church which I know is contrary to the Gospel which I believe and preach. . . . I am ready, if my schedule can be satisfactorily arranged, to enter any door that the Lord opens where there is an opportunity to co-operate with faithful, orthodox pastors in helping to build up the saints and win the lost to the Lord Jesus Christ.¹

Graham's assertion that there was no consensus on what constitutes a sound church had been directly rejected. These evangelists were certain that they knew what constituted a sound church and had expressed a determination to work only with sound churches. The first two names on the list were Bob Jones, Sr., and Bob Jones, Jr.; the third was John R. Rice. The pledge was signed by many other fundamentalists including Monroe Parker, Jack Shuler, Tom Malone, Oliver B. Greene, and Joe Henry Hankins. Over 100 evangelists initially signed the list,

and others who had not been present added their names at later times.

The following month Rice printed letters from conservative leaders who had been asked to comment on a Sword article. The article was one which challenged Donald Grey Barnhouse's encouragement of evangelicals to become more involved in broader church affairs. Rice obviously saw the comments as commitments in the struggle with new evangelicalism. The list of respondents indicates somewhat the fundamentalist leadership in the controversy against the new evangelicals. Those who wrote endorsing the Sword's separatist position included: Richard Clearwaters; David Otis Fuller, pastor of the Wealthy Street Baptist Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan; John Walvoord, president of Dallas Theological Seminary; Bob Jones, Jr.; Tom Malone; Robert Rayburn, president of Cedarville College; Ernest Pickering, a leader of the Independent Fundamental Churches of America; Chester Tulga; Monroe Parker, president of Pillsbury Conservative Baptist Bible College in Owatonna, Minnesota; William Ashbrook, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Columbus, Ohio; and Carl McIntire.² Nearly all of these were solidly on the fundamentalist side and represented the extreme separatist position. Dallas Theological Seminary would eventually move to a much softer position than the other institutions represented, and would be strongly influenced by the new evangelicalism.

In May, Rice suggested the struggle that was then going on in conservative institutions in the Chicago area as plans for a Graham crusade in that area were discussed, though the crusade did not come about until four years later. The Moody Memorial Church of Chicago, now pastored by the Englishman Alan Redpath, would enthusiastically

support a crusade, as Redpath was personally committed to the new evangelicalism. Rice hoped that Moody Bible Institute would not officially participate and urged its president, Dr. William Culbertson, to resist the tremendous pressures which would be applied. Wheaton College, twenty-five miles west of Chicago, would of course be deeply involved. Though Wheaton was "long the leading fundamental Christian college in America," it had become "largely the center of the so-called 'new evangelicalism.'" Rice also expected the National Association of Evangelicals to endorse the crusade. Though the NAE had been founded as a "protest against the National Council of Churches," the influence of Dr. Ockenga and of Billy Graham on its leadership was strong and would bring it in.³ The fundamentalist attitude toward the National Association of Evangelicals demonstrates the strategic weakness of the fundamentalist position. Large elements of the NAE membership, perhaps the majority, would repudiate most of the elements of the new evangelicalism. They would have little sympathy with the concessions which were made to science; they would continue to look on all non-evangelical spokesmen with deep suspicion and would ignore the efforts of the new evangelicals to construct a new social ethic, but they would not repudiate Billy Graham. Had Graham not been the symbol of the new evangelicalism, there would hardly have been an issue. As it was, an issue was created which could not be avoided.

An editorial in HIS, the magazine of the Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship, reflected the extreme sensitivity of evangelicals to the question of separation. Enthusiastic supporters of Graham, the leaders of the organization nonetheless felt it necessary to offer some

justification for disregarding the biblical injunctions concerning association with false teachers. His admitted that "the Bible does teach, by precept and example, that Christians are to do the work of the Lord without seeking the support or sponsorship of non-Christians." The magazine declared that Graham's efforts might well be exceptions allowed by God and that as God uses the wrath of men to praise Him, God may have raised up "non-evangelical ministers to sponsor the preaching of the Gospel, to encourage their people to attend and be saved."⁴ That the leaders of Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship felt it necessary to offer such a defense indicates the continued strength of separatist thinking among their constituency.

The posture of the National Association of Evangelicals most fully reflected this tension between the demands for more influence and a wider fellowship and the desire to preserve theological integrity. At the annual convention of the NAE in April of 1958, Dr. Paul Petticord, president of the organization, attempted to set forth the basis of the spiritual unity of evangelicals in a message titled "True Ecumenicity."⁵ Petticord first made the usual evangelical pledge to orthodoxy, adding some words to suggest an evangelical social concern, then addressed the question of theological controversy. He referred to the fundamentalist-modernist controversy of the first half of the century, thanking God "that there was sufficient strength among the Fundamentalists . . . to stand up to the challenge of the onslaughts of liberal theology." He noted the tendency of some evangelicals to declare that "that day is over" and declared:

. . . to assume that the day of controversy is over is only wishful thinking. The devil is very astute and if he cannot win by one

method he will use another. The negative approach of liberalism is past, but a more sinister movement is on foot today and I would say in the language of several writers that "we dare to open the controversy again." Too many Evangelicals are interested in living in a world without controversy and of course all of us could hope that to be possible. The new controversy today is over the same basic principles of faith as have always concerned the simple relationships of God to man and man to God, but it is dressed up in new garments and the new nomenclature is broad enough to be either meaningful or meaningless. The new attack is again against the Word of God, the Bible as the final authority.⁶

Petticord went on to warn of the dangers of ecumenical theology to evangelicals because of its deceptive terminology. He warned that the ecumenical policy of inclusivism was designed to smother evangelical testimony. He described the inclusivist program:

This is the new approach to include the Evangelical as part of the whole without limiting him in his expression of a personal witness, but at the same time carefully guarding this liberty lest it should begin to dominate the trend or the theological direction of the body as a whole. Theological liberalism attempted to destroy evangelicalism; now neo-orthodoxy wants to contain evangelism.⁷

He cited a book published in 1949 by Walter Marshal Horton, Toward A Reborn Church, as evidence of the ecumenical plan. Horton charted a program to coax the conservatives back into fellowship with the ecumenical church through gradual nurture of contacts with evangelical spokesmen. His program called for the cultivation of personal contacts with evangelical leaders, the conduct of evangelistic campaigns by ecumenists "with an earnestness which their rivals cannot fail to respect and a constant willingness to collaborate on particular evangelistic projects." He quoted Horton, "A generation of such tolerant, respectful relations might actually lead to unity, since there is an almost, invariable historic law that evangelistic movements become less separatist in the second generation."⁸

Petticord characterized the ecumenical approach to evangelicals as being

. . . to ameliorate the witness of the first generation by temporizing circumstances so that the second and third generations will be able to sufficiently temporize their convictions by the expediency of rationalization to feel that all who name themselves as Christians should be recognized as Christians, regardless of their particular interpretation of the basic principles of theological faith.

We must awaken to the fact that once again the attack is at the very foundation principles of the evangelical faith. Possibly the most popular method of limiting and ameliorating the evangelical witness is to place the Evangelical in compromising positions while complimenting him on his fundamental theology. This is happening today in denominational and interdenominational circles.⁹

Petticord had expressed strong dissent from the major contentions of the new evangelicals. He had discounted the return to orthodoxy, which was so much hailed in new evangelical circles. He had seen the new approaches to non-orthodox theologians as opportunities for contamination, and he dissociated himself from any notion that "the day of controversy was over." At the same time he went on to express strong support for the ministry of Billy Graham.

Petticord recognized that differences existed as to the methods of organization which Graham followed in his crusades but maintained that evangelicals should support him "because he is exalting the Lord Jesus as the only Saviour, honoring the Holy Spirit and is basing his authority in the Bible as the Final Word of God written." Petticord saw Graham in the following perspective:

The fact is that Dr. Billy Graham is larger than the National Council of Churches or the National Association of Evangelicals. He is not dependent upon organizations as such. However, there are certain normal channels that make an entree possible in the church or any other area of social living and it happens that Dr. Graham's principle of co-operation through a central committee has proven most successful in reaching a greater number of people who are in the church and yet not necessarily in Christ nor Christ in them. . . . It is distinctive that as an Evangelical, Dr. Graham does not have an organizational relationship that would minimize his testimony. To

accept the "co-operation of" is different from becoming "a part of" an organization.¹⁰

Again we see the serious mental reservations about fellowship with non-evangelicals which had earlier been expressed by W. K. Harrison. The ecumenical evangelism of Graham is here accepted for purely pragmatic reasons having little to do with the program of the new evangelicals. The following year Stephen Paine, an NAE spokesman, more directly addressed the controversy.

Stephen Paine was president of Houghton College and had been a president of the National Association of Evangelicals. He was author of the official NAE position paper, "Separation" Is Separating Evangelicals.¹¹ At a regional meeting during 1959 he attempted to place the organization in the theological spectrum in the light of the emergence of new evangelicalism. His address was titled "The Evangelical Position of NAE."¹² Paine reiterated the adherence of the NAE to the "historic evangelical position" built upon the doctrine of the infallibility of the Bible. He traced the challenge which liberalism had made earlier in the century, and though he recognized the distinctions between liberalism and neo-orthodoxy, he placed neo-orthodoxy basically with liberalism. He then turned to examine the fundamentalist-new evangelical dispute with obvious distaste. On the whole, he was more critical of the "neo-evangelicals." He wrote:

[The neo-evangelical label] is claimed presently by a small area of evangelical scholarship as a sort of hallmark of intellectuality, a designation which marks its bearers as somewhat better informed and more scholarly than the great body of "Bible-believing Christians" who are not even cognizant of many of the problems of biblical scholarship. . . .

The term "neo-evangelical" has also been picked up from the opposite side by certain Bible-believing Christians who from

their pronouncements may be said, perhaps not unfairly, to consider themselves a bit more orthodox, a bit more "fundamental" than others in their adherence to the doctrine of scriptural inerrancy. These accuse the assumers of this dubious title of abandoning strict insistence upon the infallibility of Scripture, of holding that this does not really matter, of moving away from the Church's historic position, the "evangelical" position.

For this attitude they have perhaps been given some occasion by reason of the statements of the self-styled "neo-evangelicals" to the effect that an effort will be made to "infiltrate liberalism," and by reason of frequent derogatory remarks about "fundamentalists" and "fundamentalism," usually with a minimum of definition of these terms.

Thus far then, it seems to me, the excitement is largely one of semantics and more definitions are urgently needed. It is perhaps fair for people to ask, "Is neo-evangelicalism different from evangelicalism? If so, is it still evangelical? If not, why bother with a meaningless appellation?"¹³

Other spokesmen would question, as Paine did here, whether there was in fact enough difference between evangelicalism and fundamentalism to justify the controversy between the two groups. Paine clearly reflected the disire of the NAE leadership to avoid the new evangelical label. Most NAE figures were careful to see the National Association of Evangelicals as broader than new evangelicalism.¹⁴ Harold John Ockenga was one of the few NAE leaders who saw the organization as a vehicle for the reform movement. Ockenga was one of the founders of the organization and was always influential in its councils. He was also the founding president of Fuller Theological Seminary and the "father of new evangelicalism." He is considered to have originated the term in an address at Fuller Seminary in 1947. Ockenga considered the National Association of Evangelicals to be representative of the new evangelicalism and did not hesitate to fully identify the organization with the aims of the movement.¹⁵

The NAE would never be united on the issues separating fundamentalism and new evangelicalism, and the orgainzation would therefore

not take a consistent position. It would continue to oppose the National Council of Churches, often quite noisily, and at the same time co-operate enthusiastically in the Graham crusades, which increasingly led evangelical churches into affiliation with the NCC rather than the NAE. As Graham became more and more a spokesman of main-stream Protestantism, the position of the NAE became more and more ambiguous. United Evangelical Action, the NAE magazine, sometimes reflected the new evangelical optimism concerning the proximity of neo-orthodoxy to the historic evangelical faith and at other times warned that the dialectic theology was merely a more subtle form of modernism. United Evangelical Action in December of 1962 revealed that no consensus had been reached when it ran opposing articles dealing with the question of separation and fellowship. Walter Martin, a professor at King's College, and a man who had been associated with Donald Grey Barnhouse, presented "The Case for Fellowship." Lowell R. Humphries, pastor of Berean Baptist Church in Eugene, Oregon, presented "The Case for Separatism."¹⁶ Today, within the National Association of Evangelicals there are still many who have been little affected by the new evangelicalism and who repudiate most of its emphases. Most fundamentalists consider the judgment of Ockenga that it is an expression of new evangelicalism correct, but they do so largely because the organization has always been strongly supportive of the ministry of Billy Graham. Were the ecumenical evangelism of Graham to disappear as an issue, the fundamentalists would probably be somewhat less hostile to the National Association of Evangelicals, and the NAE would certainly move further from the Protestant establishment.

That support of Graham was the point of division between evangelical and fundamentalist was not the position of the fundamentalists alone, however. L. Nelson Bell, the father-in-law of Graham, had written in the Southern Presbyterian Journal in November of 1957 that the New York campaign was doing much to clarify the theological situation. Bell noted that Graham was being opposed by the Roman Catholics, the modernists under the leadership of the Christian Century, and the fundamentalists led by the Christian Beacon and the Sword of the Lord. He was naturally most bitter about the fundamentalist opposition. He charged, "Not even in the writings of the Modernists have we seen the venom and distortion and untruths indulged in by some of these 'defenders of the faith' who are a disgrace to the Gospel they claim to affirm." He spoke of "a small group of men who indulge in hate, distortion and untruths in attacking Christians with whom they do not agree. They forget that Christian love is spoken of as the first fruit of the Holy Spirit in the lives of the believers." The suggestions which had been made in Christianity Today that a new working coalition might be formed around those willing to endorse the ecumenical evangelism of Graham were made explicit here by Bell. He wrote:

. . . The New York Campaign is doing much to clarify the theological situation in America.

The Roman Catholics reject the Gospel because they have added something else.

The Modernists reject the Gospel because they do not believe it.

The "Fundamentalists" reject the messenger because they do not like his methods and the company he keeps.

* This leaves a great segment within the Church who are being drawn closer together as they see God doing a marvelous work and who rejoice in this demonstration of the power of united prayer, the power of the simple Gospel message, and the power of the Holy Spirit working in the hearts of men.¹⁷

This new working coalition, by rejecting the old naturalistic liberalism and the separatist fundamentalism, would draw together around the proclamation of the kerygma by Billy Graham. While Bell lashed out against modernists, he referred to a much narrower group than did the fundamentalists. They had long used the term to cover both liberals and neo-orthodox theologians. Bell intended to proscribe only those rigorous modernists who continued to preach the skeptical naturalism which had been promoted by Fosdick and which was still promoted by the Christian Century.

The complexities of the conservative evangelical situation are suggested by consideration of the circumstances of the Southern Presbyterian Journal. The magazine represented the conservative element in the Southern Presbyterian church. The journal fought non-orthodoxy in much the same fashion as the fundamentalists Bob Jones or John R. Rice. Nonetheless, Graham was strongly supported, and many editorials were bitterly critical of the fundamentalist opposition to ecumenical evangelism. The journal carried articles very critical of the literature of the denomination as being influenced by liberalism, and when merger between the Southern Presbyterian church and less orthodox Presbyterian bodies seemed certain, the journal became the voice of a group urging that conservatives withdraw from the denomination. Bell resigned from a position on the editorial board over the withdrawal issue and was the strongest conservative spokesman urging orthodox churches to remain in the denomination. Bell died during the summer of 1973, having served the last year of his life as moderator of the denomination and having traveled widely in an effort to hold churches in the denomination. The career of the Southern Presbyterian Journal

since 1957 indicates again that support of Graham did not necessarily mean acceptance of the new evangelical program. G. Aiken Taylor became the leader of the movement to withdraw from the denomination, became editor of the journal, and was in the spring of 1973 named first vice president of the National Association of Evangelicals. Taylor had complained in an article in 1958 that the influence of neo-orthodoxy had greatly confused the theological situation by robbing theological language of meaning. He wrote:

Neither Christ nor Calvary can any longer be held to be the ground or basis of Christian unity. Today you must know what Christ and which Calvary. Neo-orthodoxy has taken the last significant step back into full theological agreement with the historic Gospel by affirming that the liberal Jesus must be replaced with the living Christ. But neo-orthodoxy says, in the next breath, that it does not mean the Christ of 17th Century orthodoxy. The issue, then, is not whether Christ will be the only answer, but whether you mean this or that when you affirm that Christ is the only answer.

The issue is not whether the Bible will be held to be the Word of God, for all are earnestly affirming the modern validity of that historic terminology. The issue is rather what is meant when you say that the Bible is the Word of God.

The problem of unity is not what to do with believers who remain at odds over the historical Jesus, but what to do when Unbelief proclaims the Lordship of the living Christ.

No greater time of danger has come upon the Christian Church than the present. For today Faith cannot be distinguished from Doubt by the language it uses or the confession it makes. Unbelief once kept itself aloof from the household of faith. Today it wants to come into the house, take a place at the table and crawl into bed with the children . . . without becoming a member of the family.

This is the situation which has driven Christians of every faith to a re-alignment of their loyalties. A new evangelical ecumenism is rising to meet the rapid ecumenism of radical theology. . . .

Thus, instead of fading into disuse, such tests as the so-called five points of fundamentalism may loom in increasing importance.¹⁸

Here Taylor was calling for a renewal of the original goal of the National Association of Evangelicals. The alignment which he pictured

was that of a solid evangelical unity against non-evangelicals. That which increasingly dominated the thinking of the new evangelicals was different. They sought a coalition of all those who would support the ecumenical evangelism of Billy Graham and would repudiate outright naturalistic liberalism. They would increasingly talk of the unity of the great center of Protestantism and more and more bitterly reject separatist fundamentalism.

In January of 1958 Christianity Today analyzed the confused theological situation in an editorial titled "Theology, Evangelism, Ecumenism."¹⁹ Though the editorial pointed in no certain direction, some outlines of the new alignments could be seen. The editorial opened:

Significant ministerial realignments during the past five years are pointing to our present religious situation as a time of transition, the directions and outcome of which are still uncertain. But the index to these realignments is not exclusively theological. It includes attitudes toward evangelism and ecumenism as well.²⁰

The editors then suggested that the clear dividing-line between evangelical and liberal which had existed since the early years of the century had been considerably blurred by the emergence of neo-orthodoxy. The church was no longer divided on a simple liberal-evangelical basis. Attitudes toward evangelism also demonstrated the end of the simple division. Where before modernists championed the social gospel and the fundamentalists spent their efforts on personal and mass evangelism, now "the gigantic evangelistic impact spearheaded by Billy Graham has broken this division down, and has engendered new reactions." They went on to point out that both sides of the old theological divide had splintered over the question of mass evangelism. Looking at the Protestant establishment, they declared:

Graham's spectacular evangelistic efforts have by and large served to shape new alignments in regular denominations through-out contemporary Protestantism. And these rearrangements are becoming increasingly significant (as doctrinal constraints) as more and more of the clergy sense the inevitable dependency of biblical evangelism upon biblical theology.²¹

While this editorial did not give clear approval or disapproval to the new alignment, the concluding sentence read: "A tragic side of the Modernist-Fundamentalism controversy was the resultant breakdown of reciprocal communication; here, at least, lies the most fruitful avenue to mutual conversation about realities that matter most."

The reports of the San Francisco Graham crusade in the May issues of Christianity Today revealed more clearly the dimensions of the new theological alignment and indicated that the campaign of the new evangelicals for acceptance by the main-line churches was having some success. The San Francisco crusade was given the widest church support of any Graham crusade to that time, and the record-breaking attendance reflected that fact. Christianity Today commented:

What makes San Francisco significant is the definite theological shifting and realignment that is taking place. . . . The division was not the one so familiar to America of "liberal" and "evangelical." The great central segment of Protestantism was committed to a mass evangelistic effort as never before. Twelve hundred churches had responded, 300 more than on opening day in New York, . . . Endorsements came in from councils of churches and denominational offices, though not from all. [Emphasis added]²²

The campaign received the endorsement of the Episcopal Diocese of California and the Presbytery of San Francisco, and many Methodist churches participated. The San Francisco and Oakland councils of churches passed resolutions supporting the endeavor. At the same time the opposition to the crusade was reported as coming from the extreme liberals and extreme fundamentalists. Reports of future campaigns

would follow this pattern: the "great central segment" of the church being brought closer together, with opposition coming from the liberals and the fundamentalists. The lack of theological unity within this central segment was not denied, but the suggestion that the area of agreement was sufficient as the basis of a new coalition was made ever more explicitly. Even stronger statements came in July, after the San Francisco crusade ended.

There was a polarization of extremes; many of those opposed at the beginning were more so at the ending. Yet in the center, there seems to have taken place a wonderful warming and softening of hearts, . . . One suburban pastor spoke for many when he said, "I can't agree with his whole theology, but I can't get over the fact that God is with him."

At the end of eight weeks, the theological center was more united than it had been in the history of the West. There was a noticeable absence of things that have tended to separate Christians. A real secret of Billy Graham's power was manifest--his ability to bring believers into touch with each other by omitting the things which divide them.

Today Christian unity in San Francisco is very real, for it is established at the cross of Christ.²³

The new evangelical desire to restore evangelical orthodoxy to a place of respectability within the major churches seemed to be close to satisfaction. Nonetheless, there was a difference between gaining support for the mass meetings and gaining acceptance of orthodoxy within the established churches. Even the passage just quoted reflects the obvious fact that dissent from Graham's theology was still general. Graham himself had told a group of ministers during the first week of the crusade:

"Some of the things I say will make you cringe. Just close your ears and eyes and wait for something you can agree with. I cannot devise a theology that will please all of you, for we come from different backgrounds."²⁴

Such an attitude toward theological difference as wide as that represented among the sponsorship of these meetings was the major point of fundamentalist criticism. Christianity Today had judged the new theological alignment with reasonable accuracy and should not have been surprised at the intensity of fundamentalist resentment. Fundamentalists saw no sufficient change in the dominant thinking within the major denominations to justify rejoicing over the unity of the theological center. They considered liberal and neo-orthodox participation in the crusades as a calculated move to fill their churches. They rejected any suggestion that support of mass evangelism indicated any meaningful warming of the theological temperature of the established church. The non-orthodox acceptance of Graham was a reflection of their desperation and the bankruptcy of their position, but it was not evidence that they recognized their bankruptcy. The great theological center which the new evangelicals now hailed was to the fundamentalists hopelessly compromised, if not actually apostate. Admittance to the mainstream to the new evangelicals seemed the path to respectability, to the fundamentalists it seemed the reverse.

In the coming years the theological alignment described by Christianity Today would influence the religious situation in America more and more. The conservative evangelicals were divided between those who had joined in the "great central segment" and those who resolutely refused any alliance with the established churches. By far the greatest number of evangelicals followed the direction urged by Christianity Today. Communication between the fundamentalists and the majority of evangelicals virtually ceased, and the fundamentalists

moved into greater isolation than they had before experienced. Though, as we have seen, many conservatives who supported the ecumenical evangelism of Graham expressed serious reservations concerning the rest of the new evangelical program, most conservative institutions moved in time in the direction which the new evangelicals urged. The strategy of the fundamentalists and the extreme popularity of Graham made it likely that institutions which tried to remain neutral would actually shift slowly toward the new evangelical position. Generally, only those institutions which adopted a stance of outright hostility toward ecumenical evangelism remained within the fundamentalist orbit. Those such as Moody Bible Institute, Dallas Theological Seminary and Biola College, which attempted to remain neutral in the dispute tended to adopt much of the new evangelical philosophy. Fundamentalists came to look upon all conservative institutions which were not explicitly fundamentalist as identified with new evangelicalism. The new evangelicals of course encouraged this view and often used the term evangelicalism to refer to their position. Fundamentalists also distinguished their position from "evangelicalism" and were content to use the broader label and forfeit their claim on any but fundamentalist institutions. As early as 1958 fundamentalist William Ashbrook wrote an important pamphlet attacking the new movement under the title "Evangelicalism: The New Neutralism."²⁵ By the end of the decade one could speak of conservative evangelicalism as a theological position, but in terms of institutions and personalities the term no longer could be used to describe a group of Christians who recognized the credentials of one another. Fundamentalists no longer had any dealings with evangelicals, and most

evangelicals took every opportunity to dissociate themselves from fundamentalists.

NOTES

CHAPTER 13

¹Sword, January 24, 1958, XXIV, 4, 8.

²Sword, February 21, 1958, XXIV, 1, 5, 7, 9.

³Rice, "If We Compromise, What Happens?" Sword, May 9, 1958, XXIV, 2, 11-12.

⁴Sword, May 16, 1958, XXIV, 2, 5, quoting "With Billy Graham at Yale," HIS (magazine of the Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship), October, 1957.

⁵Paul Petticord, "True Ecumenicity," United Evangelical Action, May 15, 1958, pp. 142-147, 163.

⁶Ibid., p. 143.

⁷Ibid., p. 143.

⁸Walter Marshal Horton, Toward a Reborn Church (New York: Harper & Bros., 1949), pp. 30-31.

⁹Petticord, "True Ecumenicity," p. 144.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 146.

¹¹See pages 25-26.

¹²Stephen Paine, "The Evangelical Position of NAE," United Evangelical Action, August, 1959, pp. 184-185.

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Interview with Clyde Taylor, Washington, D.C., August, 1973.

¹⁵Harold John Ockenga, "The New Evangelicalism," Park Street Spire, February, 1958.

¹⁶Walter Martin, "The Case for Fellowship," Lowell R. Humphries, "The Case for Separatism," United Evangelical Action, December, 1962, pp. 293-294, 304-308.

¹⁷L. Nelson Bell, "The New York Campaign--Sifting the Wheat," Southern Presbyterian Journal, July 3, 1957, pp. 2-4.

¹⁸G. Aiken Taylor, "Issues That Unite and Divide," Christianity Today, January 6, 1958, II, 16-17.

¹⁹"Theology, Evangelism, Ecumenism," Christianity Today, January 20, 1958, II, 20-23.

²⁰Ibid., p. 20.

²¹Ibid.

²²Christianity Today, May 12, 1958, II, 28, 37.

²³Christianity Today, July 7, 1958, II, 28, 29.

²⁴Christianity Today, May 26, 1958, II, 29.

²⁵William E. Ashbrook, Evangelicalism: The New Neutralism (Columbus, Ohio: printed privately by Calvary Bible Church, 1970 ed.).

CHAPTER 14

WHY THE DIVISION?

This study has consistently attempted to give first place to what the disputants themselves considered the issues. In tracing the division which occurred within conservative evangelicalism between 1940 and 1960, the greatest emphasis has been placed upon explicitly religious factors. Any view which fails to see the struggle primarily in religious terms will be essentially faulty. Historians such as G. K. Clark have pointed out that studies treating the history of the nineteenth century often ignore the influence of religion in the lives of many people. He further pointed out that social and intellectual historians have tended to concern themselves almost exclusively with the "enlightened" religious figures with whom they were in sympathy rather than with conservative figures such as Dwight L. Moody.¹ Studies which did examine the revivalists generally imposed upon the subject a basically secular framework, dealing at length with the social or political significance and ignoring the religious questions involved. The men who have been the subjects of this study, especially the fundamentalists, were in many cases hardly more secularized than the revivalists of Moody's day. Many have offered explanations of fundamentalism which ignore its essentially religious nature and the pervasive influence of religion in the life of most fundamentalists.

It is obvious to most historians today that approaches to historical investigation which insist that all the data must be examined within a single frame produced distorted pictures. Some have worked upon theological fundamentalism using a psychological frame, and others have insisted upon a socio-economic perspective. Few American historians would today accept the analysis of denominational growth offered by Richard Niebuhr without serious qualification.² His one-dimensional explanation of denomination origin as a function of economic stratification would be deemed inadequate by most contemporary church historians. One need only see the continued stability of the giant Southern Baptist Convention to convince oneself that economic heterogeneity does not automatically result in denominational division. At the same time, examination of the split-ridden career of those who withdrew from the Presbyterian church with Gresham Machen demonstrates that division may be independent of social or economic considerations. Nonetheless, the division of conservative evangelicalism was undoubtedly influenced measurably by social considerations.

The image of the social context of the division which first comes to mind is likely based upon the presumption of the higher socio-economic standing of the new evangelicals, in contrast to the down-and-out image of the fundamentalist. Evidence for such an image is not lacking. Many fundamentalists churches are made up of working class people. Fundamentalism as a form of popular religion has always had considerable attraction for those in the lower economic and social levels. Many fundamentalist pastors are poorly educated, and many must hold secular employment to maintain their families. Often

fundamentalist churches begin in storefronts and private homes. Certain fundamentalist denominations, such as the Baptist Bible group, have a strong lower middle class orientation. It is also easy to emphasize the more genuinely middle-class nature of evangelicalism. Most evangelical leadership is adequately educated. It seems obvious that evangelicalism has a strong middle class appeal. The evangelicals reach for respectability, while the fundamentalists often seem to go out of their way to generate an unfavorable impression. Fundamentalists continue to start Bible institutes, while evangelicals have been engaged in an all-out drive to achieve accreditation for their colleges.

Numerous studies have pointed out that denominations with membership in the lower income categories tend to be more conservative than more affluent groups.³ Some have offered social and economic deprivation as the basic explanation for the existence of fundamentalism. One writer who was an associate of Vernon Grounds at the Conservative Baptist Theological Seminary in Denver, but who later shifted to a more liberal theological outlook, came to see fundamentalism in this context. In 1958 Sherman Roddy authored a bitter article for Christian Century in which he described fundamentalism as the result of deprivation and pointed to amelioration of the condition as the reason for the emergence of new evangelicalism.⁴

Roddy had been through a deep personal struggle, and the picture he presented reflected the intensity of that struggle. He first explained that there were many theological conservatives who subscribed to the same theology as the fundamentalists, but who could not be classed with the fundamentalists. He found the difference to lie in

the reason for the fundamentalists adherence to his theological symbols.

Viewing the fundamentalist, Roddy judged:

His defense depends upon a particular socio-psychological outlook. He is compelled to defend tenaciously a cultural pattern which seems to make life endurable for him. . . . He is at heart a victim of fear.

. . . this sort of person is a religious have-not because quite often he is a psychological, social or economic have-not also. Thus his theological structures are intended as external props to his personality. . . . They do not give meaning to life; they provide a way of enduring this life.⁵

After elaborating further this picture of fundamentalist deprivation, Roddy suggested that the church need not give up on the fundamentalists, however, because

. . . in fact fundamentalists live in this present age and thus are not as static as they appear. In many ways they tacitly accept the data of knowledge; they buy modern automobiles, television sets and cosmetics, avail themselves of modern medicine and surgery. They are benefitting from higher wages. Their children are increasingly exposed to modern education beyond high school. So it is not surprising that there is among them a group of younger men who are impatient with fundamentalism as they find it. They call themselves the new evangelicals.

The new evangelicals are often well trained scholars who in consequence of their learning have shed much of the fear implicit to fundamentalism.⁶

In Roddy's view the upwardly mobile new evangelicals would naturally be expected to shed the distinctives of fundamentalism, because these unpleasant distinctives were the result of deprivation.

William G. McLoughlin described the view of fundamentalism presented in 1946 by Willard L. Sperry, the dean of the Harvard Divinity School. Sperry's attitude was typical of liberal churchmen of the time. According to McLoughlin, "Sperry spoke patronizingly of the 'backward' and 'ecstatic' churches as though they were the last lingering remnants of American illiteracy and underprivilege, which would soon be raised to the level of 'modern liberal Protestantism.'"

McLoughlin further noted:

Most liberal Protestants and most social scientists, noting that the pietistic sects were popular among the poorer and more socially backward segments of the population, assumed that pietism was simply an immature form of liberal Protestantism. Increased educational facilities, social welfare legislation, and a higher standard of living, they contended would elevate these benighted people to the point where they would join the mainstream of American life and thought, and leave their primitive religious notions behind.⁷

Though McLoughlin saw that this view seriously underestimated the religious base of fundamentalism and exaggerated the effect which higher standards of living would have in conforming the fundamentalists to the national pattern, he agreed that most fundamentalists did belong to this marginal group. He wrote:

On the whole the heart of this form of evangelical pietism lay in that group of upper-lower class and lower-middle class people in the nation's metropolitan centers whom sociologists and social workers referred to as "the marginal group." Although fundamentalism had its paupers and its millionaires, the majority of its members lived on the fringe between the middle and lower classes and constituted what might be called "the unsuccessful middle class." Insecure, frustrated, feeling inferior and different, most of them were struggling not so much to get into a higher social bracket as to keep from sinking into a lower one. . . . For solace and a sense of belonging they sought to recreate in various store-front churches and gospel tabernacles in the cities the simple, enthusiastic, friendly religion which had been part of their community life in the country. As such it constituted not a halfway house to the more liberal churches but the focal point of a culture within a culture.⁸

Thus McLoughlin presented the "classic" liberal analysis of the basis and appeal of fundamentalism. Fundamentalism was the natural religion of a group which failed to operate successfully in the modern world; it was a manifestation of insecurity and resentment of an inferior status. Though the demise of liberalism and the conservative drift of the churches since the Second World War has much softened

non-orthodox criticism of fundamentalism in many areas, many observers continue to assume that fundamentalism is essentially a result of economic and social deprivation.

As Sherman Roddy suggested, those who gathered to the new evangelical banner seemed to be situated higher in the socio-economic scale. Most of the leaders of the movement received at least some of their education at secular or "liberal" institutions. Despite the lack of any real statistical evidence, most observers have concluded that economic betterment was an important factor in the new evangelical move away from the isolation of fundamentalism.

Nonetheless, important qualifications must be offered. The major academic institution of fundamentalism, Bob Jones University, is solidly middle-class in orientation. The world outlook taught by that institution reflects continued adherence to the traditional bourgeois values. Discipline, hard work, the ability of the individual to succeed through honesty and self-exertion, and those values which have been labeled the "Protestant ethic" receive strong emphasis. In contrast to lower middle-class resentment of authority-figures, Bob Jones University carefully develops in its students an identification with the symbols of societal authority. It is doubtful if anywhere in America would a stronger endorsement of the traditional, and essentially middle-class Protestant ethic be made than in the chapel of Bob Jones University. At the same time, Bob Jones University is completely within the fundamentalist heritage and indeed most fully represents the independent interdenominational fundamentalist tradition.

Also strongly challenging the assumption of deprivation as the determinative factor in fundamentalism are the results of recent sociological surveys. The most forthright denial of the traditional view came from a survey done by Rodney Stark and Charles Glock. They concluded: "In contrast with the general public, church members are an extraordinarily affluent group; the poor are conspicuously absent from the church rolls. Even in the fundamentalist sects, traditionally thought to be the special havens of the poor, the majority of members are financially comfortable."⁹ Though the effort which has come in the last ten years to reach poorer groups through bus evangelism promises to bring the less affluent groups into fundamentalist churches in greater numbers, it seems to this writer that the "down-and-out" image of fundamentalism has been exaggerated. While the broader Protestant church has largely become upper-middle class and middle-class, evangelistic fundamental churches continue to enlist lower income groups. It is only in contrast to the totally bourgeois Protestant establishment that fundamentalism appears to appeal only to the economically deprived. Though no adequate study has been made of separatist fundamentalism as a whole, using modern statistical tools, the opinion of this writer is that such a study would reveal the movement to include economic groups in rough approximation to their proportion in the total population, with a measurable, but by no means determinative, weighting toward the lower middle class. Some segments of fundamentalism are almost totally working class, and many fundamentalists churches are thoroughly middle class, but the evangelistic thrust of fundamentalism produces a far more heterogeneous pattern than that found in denominational Protestantism.

Though the narrow economic perspective is essentially distortive, social influences in a broader sense perhaps have been determinative in the struggle. The most significant single difference between the new evangelicals and the fundamentalists is that the former group rejects the alienation that the latter group accepts. Some evangelicals have made a distinction between "theological separatism" and "sociological separatism," but generally the new evangelicals have challenged any separatist exclusiveness. They have sought to find a bridge to the broader theological community, and they have sought to soften the fundamentalist injunctions against "worldliness" which would make them conspicuously different in a world given over to fleshly indulgence. Probably the most helpful perspective is that used by Daniel Stevick, once a fundamentalist, who has moved some distance from orthodoxy, in his book, Beyond Fundamentalism.¹⁰

Stevick saw the original fundamentalists as revolutionaries and the softening of the new evangelicals as the natural tendency of a revolutionary movement to lose its extremism over the years. He described the first generation, which led fundamentalism from 1900 to 1930:

The earliest leaders of Fundamentalism were, for the most part, active members of one of the larger established denominations. . . . In many cases they were pastors of influential churches or teachers in seminaries. They felt the threat of "Modernism" in terms of loyalty to their churches, so this became a period of intradenominational discord. The Fundamentalist program then was to resist what seemed to be the calculated infiltration of seminary faculties, mission boards, or denominational offices by persons with dangerous leanings.

It was a time of freewheeling crusades and grandiose claims.¹¹

He then quoted Furniss:

The leaders of the movement often used martial symbols to describe the controversy, but in their minds it was not a skirmish on the periphery of theology, a duel between a crusader and an infidel. Rather it was a momentous engagement between two great armies for a victory of eternal significance.¹²

The fundamentalists lost the battles over the denominations, and the most vigorous of them withdrew into independent organizations or set up new denominations. Fundamentalism then developed in virtual isolation after 1930. "Thus the center of gravity in Fundamentalism shifted to its own institutions and into isolation from the affairs of the church at large."

The second generation of fundamentalist leadership, which developed between 1930 and 1960, grew in an environment much different from that of their elders. Stevick described the new situation facing these leaders:

Their problem is no longer that of crusading for the establishment of a church or a school in which biblical inerrancy can be freely taught. Rather, they work within institutions where "the fundamentals" have been the accepted standards for as long as they can remember. Their problem is one not of "coming out" and impressing others with the need for doing so but of conserving the convictions preserved by earlier separations. Their concern is not to establish a position over against its opposite; it is to nurture the people who have only known religious life within a Fundamentalist context. . . .

. . . The present goal is not to separate but to attract and to hold.

Another aspect of the second-generation problem is the new search for status. The first generation scorned academic standards and "worldly" insignia of status. The anti-intellectualism of the movement was aggressive and unashamed. Much learning was thought to lead to skepticism and atheism. The Fundamentalists of the first generation were content with the most unadorned worship and the starkest, prosiest publications. They seemed to hold that culture was a subtle evil. But the new generation is not content with this austere standard. [An atmosphere of "perpetual revolution" is impossible to sustain.] It wants what the first generation could only have regarded as compromises. The first generation saw itself over against the world; the second generation wants more acceptance by the world than the first generation would have thought healthy for the life of the spirit.¹³

Thus the revolutionary enthusiasm of the first generation is seen to mellow in the second. The issues which stirred the first generation, and continue to be of concern to separatist fundamentalists, seem less urgent to the second. Other concerns crowd their way into the life of the new evangelicals. As revolutionaries, the fundamentalists concentrated their energies; as heirs of the revolution, the new evangelicals want time for the broader activities of life. It is significant that Rice, Jones, and McIntire are men of the first generation, while the new evangelicals are generally younger. Many of the differences between the views of the fundamentalists and the new evangelicals can be accounted for by this fact, though it would be inadequate to consider the dispute between them merely in terms of a conflict between generations. There are many fundamentalist leaders who, like the new evangelicals, developed in the years after the great denominational struggles, and many of those who came to champion the new evangelicalism had lived through those years. The career of Donald Grey Barnhouse indicates the inadequacy of a too simple generation-conflict analysis. The essential difference is not one of age but of experience. Fundamentalists remain reactionary and radical, while new evangelicals have moved into a position of considerable accommodation with the world around them.

Chester Tulga, a fundamentalist Baptist, offered in 1957 an analysis of new evangelicalism which emphasized its second-generation aspects.¹⁴ He observed that the knowledge of early fundamentalism possessed by these younger theologians was "second-hand and derived mostly from liberal histories of fundamentalism." When he turned to an

examination of the factors which led fundamentalism to become evangelicalism, he first spoke of "the wear and tear of time." He seemed to posit as an inevitable process the decline of religious movements and organizations from their original faithfulness. He wrote:

Church history records that every movement eventually diminishes in vigor and strength of conviction; that the truths held dynamically in the beginning eventually come to be held formally. They cling to the forms and confessions and even sign them every year, but the spirit of the forms is no longer there. . . . They speak the language of Canaan, but more and more the words have a hollow sound. Just so, fundamentalism has become evangelicalism.

No movement entirely escapes the deterioration which comes with the passing of time, the emergence of new leadership which has paid no price of suffering, and the coming of a new generation which takes for granted the truths which the fathers had to fight for. Thus, fundamentalism became evangelicalism.¹⁵

Tulga next suggested that the very success of fundamentalism in erecting independent institutions and organizations, and their recent prosperity and expansion, increased the danger of compromise. He centered on one of the most important forces upon the practitioners of ecumenical evangelism when he wrote, "Societies and institutions get larger and financially prosper; but as their money needs increase and as their ambitions expand, they are more and more inclined to compromise with the sources of their income."¹⁶ As evangelical enterprises came to get a hearing from an ever-widening audience, the pressure upon evangelical spokesmen to present their cause in a way to even further enlarge that audience grew. The closer acceptance by the established churches seemed to get, the stronger became the pressure to soften the proclamation of those elements which tended to hinder that acceptance. Organizations and individuals which had before depended on explicitly orthodox support developed constituencies which included many who were

far from orthodox. This was most transparently true in the ecumenical evangelism of Graham, which came more and more to depend on the support of the churches of the major denominations. We have mentioned that the San Francisco crusade of 1957 gained much wider support than had the campaign in New York. The extended campaign held in Australia during 1959 marked the beginning of near unanimous support by the major religious organizations. Sherwood E. Wirt commented in a report published in Christianity Today that the crusade there "had the church people of Australia and New Zealand working and talking together and recognizing each other as they had never done before."¹⁷ By the time of the Australia crusade, Billy Graham's supporting constituency included all of Protestantism and indeed much of secular society. The softening of the distinctives of conservative evangelicalism by the new evangelicals in the attempt to gain wider acceptance and the wider acceptance which came as a result of the conservative swing in American Protestantism following World War II reinforced one another, and both led the evangelicals away from the increasingly isolated fundamentalists.

Any attempt to evaluate accurately the split which developed between 1940 and 1960 within conservative evangelicalism must give a central place to the new evangelical desire for de-alienation from the broader American culture, and to fundamentalist emphasis upon separation. Many issues were involved in the controversy over the years. The seeming weakening of certain evangelicals on the inspiration of scripture and their openness on questions concerning the Bible and science were examples of such issues. Nonetheless, the most bitter discussions, and the circumstances which finally brought division, involved

the attitude which was to be taken toward individuals, organizations, and the ethic of those outside the evangelical camp. Separation had become a basic element in the fundamentalist mentality. Fundamentalists considered neglect of the doctrine of separation the central reason for the defeat of the conservative forces in the denominational struggles of the early years of the movement. The new evangelicals, on the other hand, had come to consider the practice of separation the chief hindrance to the restoration of orthodox theology to a place of responsibility and influence within American Protestantism. Fundamentalists felt the alienation from their society which genuine revolutionaries always feel. The new evangelicals increasingly resented their alienation from the common tables of theological discussion. Edward John Carnell wrote explicitly that orthodoxy should be invited to join in the theological discussions of the broader church, because it had disavowed the separatism of fundamentalism.¹⁸

During 1960 both Billy Graham and Edward John Carnell contributed articles to the series published in Christian Century, "How My Mind Has Changed." Graham as the leading mass spokesman of the position which had come to be called evangelicalism and Carnell as one of the leading scholarly spokesmen of the same movement, both reflected the deep changes which had taken place during the previous decade. Graham's big meeting in Los Angeles had come in the winter of 1949, and Carnell had finished graduate school during the same year. Though Graham was careful, as always, to leave room in many of his statements for varieties of interpretation, the general tone of his article identified him with the opinions more forcefully and bitterly stated by Carnell.¹⁹

Graham's article manifested the humility which had long been his trademark and disclaimed any pose as an expert on church affairs. His unpreparedness for national exposure in 1949, and the consequent immaturity of some of his earliest statements, received considerable emphasis. Several times he expressed the wish that he could retract statements he had made in those early years, though typically he did not specify which statements. His broadened contact with the church at large was reflected by the sources which he quoted favorably. A commission appointed by the Archbishop of Canterbury and a statement of the old Federal Council of Churches were quoted as authorities on the definition of evangelism, though as usual the particular statement quoted was a quite ordinary and orthodox one which could not fail to be accepted by the broad middle segment of the church which had become the basis of his ministry. A 1928 conference of the International Missionary Council and Dr. Jesse Bader were quoted as authorities on the Gospel. Graham addressed the criticism that a majority of his converts were already members of some church, and his answer bears comparison with a comment on the subject made early in the decade. In June of 1952 Graham had written to John R. Rice:

One of the differences in present-day evangelism and the old-time evangelism is that our churches are filled with unconverted people; 65% of our decisions are by church members who have their name on a church roll but have never been born again. Naturally, the modernists do not like their members to be disturbed.²⁰

In 1960 he approached the same question in a more subtle fashion:

We are often criticized because the majority of those who respond to the appeal are already members of a church. This is true. But many have not stopped to realize that nearly half of the church members of America rarely attend church. These fringe people need a definite conversion experience or at least a recommitment to Christ.²¹

He then quoted Elton Trueblood in support of his position. The modernists who in 1952 did not want their churches disturbed by Graham-type evangelism had by 1960 become the chief backers of the Graham campaigns. This was also reflected by Graham's declaration that in the last ten years his concept of the church "had taken on greater dimension." Graham wrote:

Ten years ago my concept of the church tended to be narrow and provincial, but after a decade of intimate contact with Christians the world over I am now aware that the family of God contains people of various ethnological, cultural, class and denominational differences. I have learned that there can even be minor disagreements of theology, methods and motives but that within the true church there is a mysterious unity that overrides all divisive factors.

In groups which in my ignorant piousness I formerly "frowned upon" I have found men so dedicated to Christ and so in love with the truth that I have felt unworthy to be in their presence. I have learned that although Christians do not always agree, they can disagree agreeably, and that what is most needed in the church today is for us to show an unbelieving world that we love one another. To me the church has become a great, glorious and triumphant organism. It is the body of Christ, and the humblest member is an important part of that body. I have also come to believe that within every visible church there is a group of regenerated, dedicated disciples of Christ.²²

These words must be analyzed very carefully to discern their very deep significance. On the surface, and in terms of public activity, he had completely abandoned the separatism of fundamentalism. He had long since proven himself ready to welcome the support of even the most unorthodox Protestant churchmen. In the first paragraph here quoted he was far from candid. There was nothing in the paragraph with which even the staunchest fundamentalist would disagree. Graham knew well that the real question was the relationship of evangelicals to those whose theology differed in major, rather than minor, respects. Fundamentalists had maintained, always in principle and usually in practice, that

cooperation between orthodox believers with the kinds of differences here described by Graham was not only permitted by Scripture but was commanded. By his every action since the New York campaign, Graham had declared his intention to work with the entire Protestant community, and there was nothing here that qualified that intention in any way. The second paragraph forthrightly described an inclusivist conception of the church. At the same time, careful attention must be given to the sentence which ends the paragraph. Deep significance attaches to Graham's words: "I have also come to believe that within every visible church there is a group of regenerated, dedicated disciples of Christ." It is the opinion of this writer that this sentence contains the reason for much of the bitterness which the split within conservative evangelicalism engendered. Neither Graham nor the rest of the new evangelical leadership considered most of the non-orthodox churchmen with whom they worked other than unsaved, unregenerate non-Christians. Despite all that was written and all that was said about the conservative swing in the churches, Graham and the new evangelicals could not possibly have been ignorant of the fact that the overwhelming majority of denominational leaders considered much of Graham's preaching to be sheer nonsense. In article after article and book after book, they added so many qualifications to their "return to orthodoxy" as to leave no doubt that the faith which they professed was not the same as that which Graham proclaimed. Even today those evangelical leaders who are genuinely orthodox privately recognize that many of the men who serve on the Graham committees are not Christians in the sense which Graham's theology demands. Most evangelicals seemed to assume the calculating

stance adopted by W. K. Harrison more than to experience the deep inner revolution of Donald Barnhouse. Though Graham undoubtedly developed many genuine friendships with leaders outside of evangelical orthodoxy, he too acted more from calculation than from warmth toward non-evangelicals. Publicly, however, he had completely committed himself to the mainstream. No less than Edward John Carnell, Graham had repudiated separatist fundamentalism.

The article by Edward John Carnell appeared in Christian Century the month following that written by Graham and even more clearly revealed the distance which had come to exist between evangelicalism and fundamentalism.²² Carnell in fact based the entire article on the difference between the two. It was his thesis that orthodoxy existed in both classical and cultic forms. Evangelicalism deserved to be invited to the discussions of theology largely because it had repudiated fundamentalism. Carnell had developed the same theme at greater length the year before in The Case for Orthodox Theology.²³ The book had been extremely bitter toward fundamentalism, describing it as "orthodoxy gone cultic," and its publication can be taken as the date at which the split between evangelicalism and fundamentalism became complete. John R. Rice attacked the book repeatedly in the pages of the Sword, and it was defended by Harold Lindsell, the dean of Fuller Seminary, where Carnell was teaching, and by Charles E. Fuller, the founder of the institution.

In Christian Century Carnell observed that there were two schools of orthodoxy and wrote:

The first school is cultic orthodoxy. The cult lives by mores and symbols of its own devising; it makes no effort to join fellowship with the church universal. The more belligerent elements in orthodoxy come from this school.

The second school is classical orthodoxy. The followers of this position are impatient with the small talk of the cult; they long for authentic conversation on historic themes. Most younger men, especially those who have taken time to get a decent education, belong to this school.²⁴

He further wrote, "I know of no enlightened conservative who wants to perpetuate the ethos of fundamentalism." Though the struggle between fundamentalism and modernism may have been "unavoidable" in the early years, he saw "no reason why elements in the modern church should be locked in prejudice." He judged the doctrine of separation to be the dividing line between evangelicalism and fundamentalism and judged fundamentalism in the following sentences:

. . . I concluded that fundamentalism had formulated its view of the church with an eye to the interests of the cult. Fundamentalists believe they are superior because they have withdrawn from the historic denominations; they imagine that they alone glorify the gospel. Since the fundamentalist is deprived of the happy security that comes from communion with the church universal, he must devise securities all his own. And the handiest substitute--the one calling for the least energy and skill--is to appear better by making others appear worse. . . .

. . . Ever occupied with the work of negative status, the fundamentalist must blame others for evil; he must find a scapegoat. . . .

.
The fundamentalist continues to go it alone because he fears that friendly conversations will lead to theological compromise. His fears trace to an imperfect grasp of the Word of God. When we communicate with the church we do not communicate with the errors of individual members. We communicate only in the truth, the truth bequeathed by Christ and the Apostles.

Perhaps the day will come when the fundamentalist will temper his separatism by the wisdom of the ages. Perhaps not. But in the meantime let us not be too disturbed by his vanity. The fundamentalist means well. He wants status in the church, but he errs in the way he goes about getting it. Having missed the way, he needs our pity, not our scorn.²⁵

Carnell was writing for the liberal Christian Century. When this is remembered and the last paragraph in the preceding passage is carefully read, the severity of the split between fundamentalism and evangelicalism begins to be understood.

NOTES

CHAPTER 14

¹Goerge Kitson Clark, The Making of Victorian England (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1962).

²Richard Niebuhr, The Social Sources of Denominationalism (Hamden, Conn.: The Shoe String Press, 1929).

³Lowell Streiker and Gerald Strober, Religion and the New Majority (New York: Association Press, 1972).

⁴Sherman Roddy, "Fundamentalists and Ecumenicity," Christian Century, October 1, 1958, LXXV, 1109-1110.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Ibid., p. 1110.

⁷William McLoughlin, Modern Revivalism (New York: Ronald Press, 1959), pp. 464-465.

⁸Ibid.

⁹Rodney Stark and Charles Glock, Patterns of Religious Commitment (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1968).

¹⁰Daniel Stevick, Beyond Fundamentalism (Richmond, Va.: John Knox Press, 1964).

¹¹Ibid., p. 21.

¹²Norman Furniss, The Fundamentalist-Modernist Controversy (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1954), p. 37, quoted in Stevick, Beyond Fundamentalism, p. 21.

¹³Stevick, Beyond Fundamentalism, pp. 22-23.

¹⁴Chester E. Tulga, "Fundamentalism: Past and Future," Sword, October 4, 1957, XXIII, 1, 11-12.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 11.

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Christianity Today, May 25, 1959, III, p. 31.

¹⁸Edward John Carnell, "Orthodoxy: Cultic vs. Classical," Christian Century, March 30, 1960, LXXVII, 377-379.

¹⁹Graham, "What Ten Years Have Taught Me," Christian Century, February 17, 1960, LXXVII, 186-189.

²⁰Sword, June 6, 1952, XIV, 9.

²¹Graham, "Ten Years," p. 187.

²²Carnell, "Orthodoxy," pp. 377-379.

²³Carnell, The Case for Orthodox Theology (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1959).

²⁴Carnell, "Orthodoxy," p. 377.

²⁵Ibid., p. 379.

CHAPTER 15

THE LESSENING OF CONSERVATIVE ALIENATION

In the fall of 1957, Martin E. Marty, reviewing a book by Gabriel Hebert, wrote in Christian Century: "Had a book titled 'Fundamentalism and the Church' appeared a decade ago it would have dealt with a virtually dead issue. . . . Most historical surveys suggest that by 1931 it had lost its political potency, having failed to capture any major church body. But it persisted in newly organized churches and in interdenominational agencies, and as an attitude toward the faith of many Christians. . . ." Marty went on to observe: "A transformed fundamentalism has, in very recent years, presented itself as a potent position. . . ."¹ By the later years of the decade, the signs of the continued strength of conservative opinion within the churches were too strong to be ignored any longer. A survey of Protestant ministers conducted by the Opinion Research Corporation for Christianity Today during 1958 revealed that, when given the four labels, conservative, fundamentalist, liberal, and neo-orthodox from which to choose, seventy-four percent of respondents adopted one of the first two. Over one-third continued to label themselves as fundamentalists.² Even after discounting the results of the survey in deference to the tendency of pollsters to weight their findings in favor of those who commissioned the poll, it remains true that conservative thought in the churches deserved far more attention than it ordinarily received from

secular or non-orthodox observers. The resurgence of evangelicalism during the fifties forced reconsideration of the relationship of "Bible-believing Christians" to the rest of the church.

New evangelicals had made their greatest dissent from traditional fundamentalism in the approach which they made to those outside the evangelical circle. While the new evangelicals dismissed the isolationism of fundamentalism, they did not set forth any consistent position of their own. Few followed Donald Barnhouse in urging that evangelicals become enthusiastic participants in the activities of the National and World Councils of Churches. Most new evangelical discussion of the question ended in a warning of the dangers to theological integrity involved in organizational affiliation with groups which were not explicitly evangelical and insisted that the desired unity of the universal church was spiritual rather than visible.

An article in Christianity Today in April, 1957 discussed the ecumenical drive for organic church union in a typical evangelical fashion. The article was titled, "Do We Want a Giant Church?" and the first line declared: "I have come to the firm belief that ecumenicity of spirit and purpose is more to be desired than organic union of our American churches." The article ended: "The ecumenical movement, . . . will serve both God and man best if it develops as a fellowship of the spirit. A centralization of religious organization and thought is as dangerous to Protestantism as similar trends are to democracy in the realm of civil government."³ Rarely did evangelicals come to any other conclusions when examining the efforts of the

ecumenical movement. Openness toward dialogue with non-evangelical theologians was a major element in the new evangelical revision of fundamentalism, but this did not mean they wanted evangelicals to join the organizations of the mainstream. Though their criticisms of the ecumenical movement were usually less vitriolic than those of the fundamentalists, the substance of the criticisms were usually little different. No fundamentalist was a stronger critic of the ecumenical movement than James DeForest Murch of the National Association of Evangelicals, and his attacks on the "Coming Great Church" won general approval from that group. Christianity Today reported the views of the leadership of the NAE in 1957:

Spiritual unity is cited as evidence of genuine ecumenical approach founded on the creedal statements given, rather than on the basis of mere organization. In criticism from both the fundamentalist right and the liberal left, NAE leaders find evidence that they have followed a balanced course, freeing the evangelical movement from the stigma of extreme fundamentalistic abuses, and guarding it from liberal and neo-orthodox wanderings.⁴

This perhaps was near to a typical statement of evangelical views on the subject. The close involvement with non-orthodox theologians advocated by Barnhouse and practiced by such evangelicals as Edward John Carnell was to be avoided, but the belligerent stance of the fundamentalists was also avoided. This had of course been the attitude of the leaders of the organization since its founding. Most NAE men would cooperate with the non-orthodox Protestant leadership in the Graham meetings but remained suspicious of contacts outside that framework. They continued to warn against institutional, or what they called "structural," relationships with non-evangelicals.

In the fall of 1957 Christianity Today commented in a report on the Oberlin Conference of the World Council of Churches that the

discussions of the conference would raise certain questions in the minds of evangelical Christians. First among these questions was the following:

Is it proper to speak of "a common faith" and of "a common witness" in the absence of common doctrinal beliefs? Does not the extent of doctrinal unity define the extent of common faith and witness? Is genuine faith really devoid of intellectual content?⁵

The following month the magazine criticized the "indiscriminate ecumenism" which had produced the merger of the United Presbyterian Church of North America and the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A.⁶ Rarely did the pages of Christianity Today reflect the optimism with regard to the strength of evangelical witness within the major Protestant organizations which was common in Eternity.

Paul Rees reviewed one of the major works by a new evangelical on the subject of the unity of the church in March, 1958. The review of Ecumenism and the Evangelical by Marcellus Kik appeared in Christianity Today. The position of Kik was reported by Rees in the following words:

The Holy Spirit is the great unifier, and his ministry in this regard consists principally in bringing the church to a oneness of witness concerning Jesus Christ: "his pre-existence, incarnation, earthly life and ministry, crucifixion, resurrection, ascension, present reign and coming again." It is the "conflict of voices" within the visible church respecting these central matters that constitutes more of a scandal than the existence of denominational groups.⁸

Evangelical discussions of the ecumenical question generally were held on the assumption that genuine unity in the churches could come only if all factions accepted the principal elements of evangelical theology. Visible unity which obscured important theological differences was constantly warned against. Christianity Today complained at the absorption of the International Missionary Council by the World Council of Churches in 1958:

That the ecumenical movement's leadership places a one-sided emphasis on unity at the expense both of the theological and of the evangelistic and missionary responsibility of the church is not an unfamiliar charge. The present WCC-IMC merger simply multiplies the evidence of such scrambled values and priorities.⁹

Any fundamentalists who charged that the new evangelicals were never critical of the liberal and neo-orthodox clergymen, who dominated Protestantism, were certainly in error, but the criticism was muted by their scholarly pretension, their desire for greater influence, and their personal associations. The ambiguity of the new evangelical position can be seen in the complaint of Carnell that "the ecumenical movement extends a cordial welcome to open antagonists of the resurrection."¹⁰ Did not Graham's ecumenical evangelism do the same?

The attitude of most new evangelicals toward non-orthodox clergymen must be judged insincere. The extensive mental reservations which were necessary to justify the acceptance of liberal support for the ecumenical evangelistic crusades of Graham render suspect their loud call for a broader basis of Christian fellowship. They wanted the benefits of admission to the theological mainstream but did not want to pay the price. Most of them regularly declared that the purpose of contact with the broader church was to extend the influence of evangelicalism and to renew for fundamentalist theology a claim for a central position in theological discussions. Usually they insisted that such contact with the broader church would involve no concession of significance on their part. Carnell offers an example:

The fundamentalist continues to go it alone because he fears that friendly conversations will lead to theological compromise. His fear traces to an imperfect grasp of the Word

of God. When we communicate with the church, we do not communicate with the errors of individual members. We communicate only in the truth, the truth bequeathed by Christ and the apostles: 11

The reformers of fundamentalism were certain that they could return orthodoxy to a place of respectability without sacrificing distinctives. They thought they could influence non-orthodox clergymen without being influenced themselves by these same clergymen. The reception given this reformed fundamentalism by the non-evangelical community reflected awareness of this hesitance, and at several points this awareness threatened the new evangelical endeavor.

The non-evangelical opposition to the attempt of the new avangeli-
cals to restore orthodoxy to a central position in American Protestant-
ism was led by the Christian Century. The influence of the Christian Century had, of course, been greatly lessened by the demise of liberalism as the dominant force in American theology, but the journal continued to be a major forum for the discussion of political-ecclesiastical affairs. The editors were critical of Billy Graham from the very beginning, and their criticism of the evangelist increased as he became more prominent, especially as he began to gain support outside the evangelical circle. This opposition to Graham reached a high point with the New York crusade of 1957. In an editorial titled "Fundamentalist Revival," the journal charged:

Behind the methods and the message of Billy Graham, behind the revivalistic phenomenon which has just extended its lease on Madison Square Garden and emerged on national television, is a portentous development to which the nation's press and most of its churches are curiously blind. It is the attempted revival of fundamentalism as a major factor in Protestant life. The narrow and divisive creed which the churches rejected a generation ago is staging a comeback. Through skillful manipulation of means and persons, . . . fundamentalistic forces are now in

position aggressively to exploit the churches. If their effort succeeds it will make mincemeat of the ecumenical movement, will divide congregations and denominations, will set back Protestant Christianity a half-century.

The editors observed that fundamentalism had had relatively little influence within the major denominations since its defeat in the twenties, but that "now they have apparently decided that the time has come to break out of their isolation and to contend once more for the soul of American Protestantism." The Century warned that though fundamentalism suffered an ignominious defeat a generation ago, "this time it has reasons for anticipating a different outcome."¹²

The following month in a review of Contemporary Evangelical Thought, edited by Carl Henry, the Christian Century again warned of the danger to the church posed by the renewed fundamentalist assault on the mainstream.¹³ In "Intruders in the Crowded Center," Martin Marty wrote:

Since the dying down of partisan theological controversy before the Second World War, theologians and preachers have been working in a congenial climate. . . . [But] unless we misunderstand the aggressive actions of renascent extremists, a battle has begun for control of the crowded center of Protestant theology. Close quarters may make the battle even more sanguinary than were the long-range duels of a generation ago.

Marty was generally critical of the efforts of the new evangelicals, though he grudgingly recognized some scholarly worth in the volume. His main concern was their effort to establish evangelicalism as a position occupying the center of the theological spectrum. He approved the selective "humility" of the writers and charged that this humility did not "go with the presumptuousness of an over-all effort to pre-empt and monopolize the center position of historic biblical Christianity." He warned that their chances for success were high.

They are well financed, have outreaches through most modern media of mass communication. They conform easily to popularly accepted political, social and economic viewpoints. Their reiteration of "the Bible says" easily takes in authentic but ill-informed evangelicals, including prominent nontheological spokesmen. So this neo-evangelicalism stands a good chance of "bumping" from the evangelical center many whose claims to that position have long historic roots.¹⁴

However accurately Marty may have judged the prospects for new evangelical success, his remarks revealed the apprehension which was felt in certain non-evangelical circles at the prospect of a renewal of fundamentalist revivalism in the churches. In March of 1958 the long-time editor of the Christian Century was bitter in denunciation of the New York crusade.

Charles Clayton Morrison saw in Graham's revivalism the means through which fundamentalism would make a bid for respectability. He charged that "the whole body of New York Protestantism delivered its faith into the hands of the fundamentalist cult." He spoke of a "truncated evangelism" which was giving "a distorted, shallow, inflated and unbiblical conception of Christianity." Morrison declared, "A Protestantism that is fast outgrowing its own entail of literalism as it moves into the ecumenical dimension of the Christian faith must not allow the world to believe that fundamentalism represents its conception of Christianity."¹⁵ Just as Carl McIntire complained that Graham had allowed the impression to be given that he and Ralph Sockman proclaimed the same faith, Morrison complained that the Protestant establishment had identified itself with the faith of Billy Graham. It was significant that Morrison's article was titled "The Past Foreshadows the Future." For the genuine liberals no less than for the fundamentalists, the modernist-fundamentalist division had become a permanent fixture of American Protestantism, but even Christian Century would be forced

to recognize in the new evangelical effort important alterations in the fundamentalist pattern. The first positive comment on the softening within the conservative camp came in an article by Arnold Hearn in March of 1958.¹⁶

"Fundamentalist Renaissance" was a major statement on the new evangelicalism and reflected the success which the spokesmen for the movement had had in forcing non-evangelicals to take notice of their efforts. Hearn first listed some of the signs of the renewed energy of orthodoxy:

Away from the centers of ecclesiastical power and theological education in the major denominations, there has been a remarkable renaissance of intellectual activity among fundamentalist scholars, several of whom have studied in centers like Basel and Zurich and hold doctorates from such places as Harvard and Boston. The periodical Christianity Today has made its appearance, counting President Eisenhower's pastor among its contributing editors. The latest volume on apologetics from the pen of the president of Fuller Theological Seminary has been put before the public by a front-rank publisher. And Billy Graham storms city after city under the auspices of the "respectable" churches.¹⁷

Hearn offered the following evaluation of the young theologians:

A new generation of earnest intellectuals is appearing within the ranks of avowedly fundamentalist groups and educational institutions. These thinkers do not personally bear the battle scars which marked the leaders who engaged in the earlier and futile fight to halt "modernism," and they are not themselves at present embroiled in major struggles of ecclesiastical politics. A strand of irenicism runs through their thought. They are able to view other kinds of theology more objectively and appreciatively than their predecessors did in the 1920s, and to deal responsibly with these theologies from the standpoint of their own presuppositions. A new flexibility is developing in their restatement of Protestant orthodoxy and with it a capacity to make their case in terms more sensitive to the integrity of the modern mind. There are trends evident within contemporary fundamentalism which may ultimately go much farther than they have yet gone, and which are already beginning to render seriously inappropriate the usually contemptuous attitude of non-fundamentalists.

Indeed, some will even object to calling these men fundamentalists, on the ground that such an alteration in outlook warrants

their classification as a different species. And if the term refers simply to an anti-intellectual and rather venomous fanaticism, then these are not fundamentalists.¹⁸

He saw them as "endeavoring to disentangle the core of concern for unqualified theological orthodoxy from the more objectional traits which have heretofore seemed inseparable from fundamentalism." Hearn thought, "It would be well if the more liberal theological seminaries began to pay more serious attention to the fundamentalism they represent." The article could hardly have been more satisfying to the new evangelicals if they had written it themselves. Though Christian Century would of course continue to be strongly critical of orthodoxy in general and conservative evangelicalism in particular, they had here recognized the potency of the new evangelical effort. Hearn judged that there was a chance that this "respectable" fundamentalism might catch on, that it might "begin to exert a much larger influence beyond its own circles." One sign of this extended influence was that certain new evangelicals, such as Edward John Carnell, began to be regular contributors to Christian Century. Perhaps more important was the fact that Christianity Today had become the most widely read religious magazine among Protestant ministers.¹⁹ The strongest vehicle for the promotion of evangelicalism continued to be the ecumenical evangelism of Billy Graham and the personal popularity of the evangelist.

More than any other single factor it was the tremendous success of Billy Graham which thrust evangelical orthodoxy again into the national spotlight. While any thorough analysis of the reasons for Graham's success lies beyond the scope of this study, several elements which made that success possible have direct bearing upon its subject. Chief

among these was the conservative swing which the nation took following the immediate post-war period. Reaction to the threat of communism joined with normal post-war conservatism to produce a climate in which conservative spokesmen in all areas were more often accorded a hearing. Most evangelicals embraced a political and social philosophy which was individualistic and conservative. The strong conservative tenor of political life in the nation during the fifties went far toward lessening the sense of alienation which conservatives had felt since their defeat during the denominational struggles. Political liberalism had dominated the national life since the depression and had strengthened the feeling of alienation caused by the conservative's ouster from the denominations. The stirring of nationalism involved in the war effort and general sympathy with the conservative tone of political life after the war had been very real solvents upon the sense of alienation. When the awareness that liberalism in religion had been routed by something called neo-orthodoxy suddenly was impressed upon the evangelical community in the early fifties, it was easy for many to feel that the liberal direction in religion had been reversed, just as had been the liberal direction in politics, and that the churches were on the verge of a return to full orthodoxy. The conservative swing of the nation as a whole following the war both aided Graham in becoming a nationally recognized religious figure and encouraged evangelicals to again feel an identification with American culture.

Where in the thirties the fundamentalists stood largely alone in preoccupation with religion, in the fifties there was a national religious boom. Many observers have commented upon the great popularity

of religion during the 1950s, but for the purpose of this study it is most important to note that the boom worked strongly to lessen the sense of separateness which evangelicals felt. The great expansion in church building, in the publication of religious books, and above all the prominence of religious spokesmen pointed to what has been called the "revival of interest in religion."²⁰ Bishop Fulton J. Sheen, Norman Vincent Peale, and Billy Graham shared the national spotlight throughout the decade, and many secular and liberal observers found the three to have much in common. Most comment on the religious boom centered upon its alleged shallowness and its easy identification with American nationalism and "go-getter" business philosophy. Particularly critical of the popular religious boom were the neo-orthodox spokesmen. In many respects the "success-oriented" religious presentations of the fifties reversed the emphasis which neo-orthodoxy, and fundamentalism, placed upon the distance of man from God. The dialectical theologians often complained of the hint in much popular preaching that God could be manipulated or enrolled as a supporter of human endeavors. Martin Marty wrote in 1958:

The theological revival of the past quarter-century has found it necessary, in order to dissasociate itself from the packagers of deity, to re-explore the original Protestant Reformation, the American realist tradition, and contemporary Continental thought. Perhaps the renaissance began with Walter Rauschenbusch in his later thought. Reinhold Niebuhr and Paul Tillich have had to move against the stream in asserting the distance between man's aspirations and God's ways. The profundity of their concern is seen in exaggerated outline against the background of a nation whose religious symbols remain Dr. Peale, Dr. Graham, Mr. Eisenhower or, on a lower level, the producers of the "Man Upstairs" kind of music.²¹

One of the constant criticisms of the revival of the 1950s was that it was a revival of "interest in religion" rather than a genuine religious

revival. Marty and others used the term "religion-in-general" to label the object of this revival of religious interest, and in considering the relation of Graham-style evangelicalism to the revival of the fifties, he wrote in an article published in the Christian Century:

This is not the place to detail the assets and liabilities of the phase of revival which lay on the border between religion-in-general and churchly awakening. But several observations are in order. First, despite its appeal to evangelical orthodoxy it was extremely "liberal" in its high-Arminian view of man, preached to men who could not well carry out its ethical injunctions in nonindividualistic society. Second, despite its professed evangelicalism it fit into the erosive pattern of the revival in general by its glossing over the theological particularity toward the purposive intent of securing decisions for Christ. (This always struck me as sleight-of-hand ecumenicity which avoided the basic issues at the heart of the ecumenical movement's problem and potential.)

Third--and this needs no extensive elaboration--the secular techniques of mass manipulation were employed here more obviously than at other places in orthodox religious contexts, despite the efforts of Graham and his followers to provide the "personal touch." Finally, in the nature of the support given it, particularly in New York and San Francisco, was to be seen its profound appeal: an attempt to deal with urban centers alienated not simply from religion or from Christ but from evangelical Protestantism attracts--almost pathetically--Protestants of diverse viewpoints. Many of them publicly disassociated themselves from the message but supported the "crusades" on the theory that "anything that is happening is better than nothing." What separates this form of the revival from the others, if we take the viewpoint of biblical religion, is this: despite the obvious dangers of these techniques and despite its contributions to religion-in-general, the kerygmatic center of the Christian faith is proclaimed. Then, let the wind blow where it will.²²

Marty was one of those neo-orthodox spokesmen who followed Reinhold Niebuhr in criticism of ecumenical evangelism and the individualistic message of Graham. Niebuhr had been one of the principal critics of the New York crusade and continued to charge that Graham failed to take seriously the corporate aspects of the problem of sin. The point which is of greatest interest here is that Niebuhr and Marty, and indeed the Christian Century, represented a minority position. They were

criticizing the evangelicalism of Graham because of its identification with national mores which they considered unacceptable, but which were obviously held by a majority. How different from earlier liberal criticism of fundamentalists as representatives of an insignificant, obsolete position. In this situation the evangelicals were identified with the national culture, and the critics represented a high-brow minority given attention only by other high-brows.

In a Christian Century article in June, 1959, William McLoughlin, a professional critic of evangelical revivalism, made comments which reveal how fully the evangelicals could feel at one with the spirit of their time. He first suggested their purpose: "Billy Graham and the other revivalists of the 1950s seem to be leading the 'saving remnant' of 'born-again' Christians on a crusade to combat secularism, moral relativism, and 'liberalism' by a return to the old-time religion." Then he wrote:

There are in any revival both social and theological implications which churchmen overlook at their peril. For example, revivalists in the 1950s have usually related the gospel message to the problems of the day by referring to Christianity as the bulwark against communism, as the basis of the "American way of life," as the cure for juvenile delinquency or as the spearhead of an attack upon "godless" schools and colleges. They have spoken of salvation as a way of obtaining peace of mind, peace of soul and a sense of security "in these crisis times." On occasion, revivalists have even given the gospel an economic or political content--as when Billy Graham refers to the dangers of government spending, the virtues of Chiang Kai-shek, the folly of foreign aid, or the cross as the "only cure" for racial prejudice.²³

The social and political content of most evangelical preaching was quite in keeping with the dominant thinking of the decade and laid the basis for the attempt to lessen the ecclesiastical isolation of the conservative evangelicals.

Thus, in terms of the church boom of the decade, the widely heralded "revival of interest in religion," and the conservative social and political tenor of the period, conservative evangelicals began to feel themselves a part of the dominant national culture. Indeed, as the prominence of Graham continued to grow, they could well imagine that conservative evangelicalism would give direction to the renewal of interest in religion and would again assume a position of national leadership. Though the attitude toward the "return to orthodoxy" professed by leading non-orthodox clergymen continued to be ambiguous and though they carefully defended their institutional independence through rejection of any except "spiritual" unity of the churches, they began to feel that evangelical orthodoxy had again moved to the center of the theological stage. Though some, such as McLoughlin, would complain that the new evangelicals emphasized "spiritual ecumenicalism" and opposed "organizational ecumenicalism," most denominational leadership gave strong support to the Graham crusades and spoke with respect of the efforts of the new evangelical theologians. Religious leaders with little sympathy for their theology had, nonetheless, by the end of the decade come to grant them serious consideration.

Writing in Church History, Dr. Sydney Ahlstrom of Yale University specifically excluded the new evangelicals from the blanket charges which he made against fundamentalism. Ahlstrom wrote, "To my mind, a person is not a Fundamentalist if he speaks to the issues, is aware of the problems, is well-informed, and is in communication with those from whom he dissents."²⁴ By 1958, when he wrote, most non-evangelical spokesmen would have agreed with Ahlstrom's insistence that these

younger theologians must not be classed with the disreputable fundamentalists. Certainly, the new evangelicals were pleased with this differentiation. Edward John Carnell wrote in the Christian Century of the "anxious breed of younger men who are conservative in theology but are less than happy when they are called 'fundamentalists.'" Carnell went on:

Since a goodly company of younger conservatives are trying to restore the classical lines of orthodoxy, philosophy of religion ought to reserve the term "fundamentalist" for the person who confuses possession of truth with possession of virtue or who defends a separatist view of the church. Unlike fundamentalism, orthodoxy does not effect a monopoly on truth. It rejects the cultic quest for negative status; it is ready to entertain friendly conversation with the church universal.²⁵

By 1960 the new evangelicals had largely convinced the leaders of main-line Protestantism that they deserved to be spared the stigma of association with separatist fundamentalism, and it had become common for non-orthodox spokesmen to distinguish between respectable and non-respectable conservatives. The 1963 annual meeting of the National Association of Evangelicals prompted even the Christian Century to comment that that organization was "moving in a constructive direction" and exercising "greater responsibility in citizenship and churchmanship."²⁶

In 1952 Graham had held a crusade in Washington, D. C., and in 1960 he returned to that city. It was his first repeat of a crusade in a major American city, and it prompted significant comments from Christianity Today. Many things had changed in the eight years; among them the magazine noted:

Instead of a boyish tent-preacher who had recently been "puffed" into a national phenomenon, he was now a mature, recognized national leader, the confidant of statesmen. The voice from the "wilderness" of the Carolina coastal plain had become an interpreter of world events in the light of God's Word, and in the context of his own conversations with queens and premiers.

Eight years ago Billy Graham preached on the Capitol steps, . . . This week he is speaking in Griffith Stadium, . . . to perhaps 25,000 or more. President Eisenhower had indicated he would be among those in attendance. . . .

Eight years ago Jerry Beavan had to warn Graham and Barrows that Washington would look askance at the brilliant ties and gabardine suits they were accustomed to wearing. . . . By contrast, last week several hundred Congressmen, diplomats and government employees sat down at a banquet in the Presidential Ballroom of the Statler Hilton Hotel, . . . to hear Billy speak. In a corner of the beveled invitation were the succinct words, "Black Tie."

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In 1952 the sponsorship of the crusade was limited to a scattered group of churches, many of them small. This week the evangelist was being welcomed by some 300 churches of the metropolitan area, and unofficially by the Council of Churches of the National Capitol Area, with solid support from its retiring director, Dr. Frederick E. Reissig, and from its chairman of evangelism, Dr. Clarence Cranford. Thus Graham's first return visit to a major city to hold a crusade resulted in a significant response from the main stream of Protestant churches.²⁷

NOTES

CHAPTER 15

¹Martin E. Marty, "Fundamentalism and the Church," Christian Century, November 27, 1957, LXXIV, 1411-1413.

²Christianity Today, March 31, 1958, II, 30.

³"Do We Want a Giant Church?" Christianity Today, April 29, 1957, I, 8-9.

⁴Christianity Today, October 14, 1957, I, 28.

⁵Christianity Today, November 25, 1957, II, 20.

⁶Christianity Today, December 23, 1957, II, 21.

⁷Marcellus Kik, Ecumenism and the Evangelical (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1957).

⁸Christianity Today, March 31, 1958, II, 35.

⁹Christianity Today, June 9, 1958, II, 22.

¹⁰Christianity Today, September 1, 1958, II, 18.

¹¹Christian Century, March 30, 1960, LXXVII, 379.

¹²"Fundamentalist Revival," Christian Century, June 19, 1957, LXXIV, 749-750.

¹³Carl F. H. Henry, ed., Contemporary Evangelical Thought (Great Neck, N.Y.: Channel Press, 1957).

¹⁴Martin E. Marty, "Intruders in the Crowded Center," Christian Century, July 3, 1957, LXXIV, 820-821.

¹⁵Charles Clayton Morrison, "The Past Foreshadows the Future," Christian Century, March 5, 1958, LXXV, 271-274.

¹⁶Arnold Hearn, "Fundamentalist Renaissance," Christian Century, April 30, 1958, LXXV, 528-530.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 528.

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Christianity Today, March 31, 1958, II, 30.

²⁰Martin E. Marty, "The Triumph of Religion-in-General," Christian Century, September 20, 1958, LXXV, 1016-1019.

²¹Ibid., p. 1019.

²²Martin E. Marty, "A Revival of Interest," Christian Century, November 12, 1958, LXXV, 1299.

²³William G. McLoughlin, "The Revival of Revivalism," Christian Century, June 24, 1959, LXXVI, 743-745.

²⁴Sydney Ahlstrom, "Continental Influence on American Christian Thought Since World War I," Church History, September, 1958, pp. 257.

²⁵Christian Century, August 26, 1959, LXXVI, 971.

²⁶Christian Century, May 8, 1963, LXXX, 607.

²⁷Christianity Today, June 20, 1960, IV, 23-24.

CHAPTER 16

CONCLUSION

By 1960 evangelicalism had become established as a theological-ecclesiastical position distinct from fundamentalism. The origin of the division between these two groups has been traced from the early days of the National Association of Evangelicals. As has been mentioned, the great majority of the conservative theological community followed Graham and the new evangelicals, though often rejecting important elements of the new evangelical program. By 1960 communication between evangelicals and fundamentalists had generally ended. Most institutions had definitely made a choice between the two groups, though a few continued to attempt friendly relations with both groups. Evangelicalism had matured as a position in the eight years between 1952 and 1960. The next eight years would bring developments which would render untenable many of the new evangelical assertions. Liberalism would again become the dominant force in the country, and the political, social, and theological climate would be much altered from that which prevailed during the Eisenhower years. The newly restored evangelical sense of belonging would be seriously tested as radical views gained ever wider acceptance in American life. As radicalism was installed as the "cutting edge of change," evangelicals became increasingly preoccupied with the question of their relationship to the dominant culture. In general,

they were unwilling to return to the isolation of earlier years and found themselves strongly influenced by secular Americanism.

The return to orthodoxy widely hailed by evangelicals during the fifties proved to be very shallow indeed. The strength of basic liberalism in the American Protestant establishment had been underestimated, and it came forth during the sixties in ever more radical forms. In most American discussions, the contest between the Barthian and Bultmanian version of dialectical theology ended in a victory for demythologizing. Even during the fifties it should have been apparent to the new evangelicals that the strongest American spokesmen of neo-orthodoxy, such as Reinhold Niebuhr, felt little of the genuinely conservative spirit which moved Barth. In time, Tillich, Christian atheism, and the "death of God" theologians revealed the mental set of American theological discussion. While the "death of God" was never more than a toy for the seminarian, its patent radicalism and the extent to which it was given serious consideration in Protestant circles challenged the new evangelical view of the growth of conservative influence in the major church groups. As the American theological picture became deeply blurred in the middle of the decade, most observers despaired of predictions concerning the direction which the theologians would move. Few evangelicals continued to feel that there was any conservative swing in the church as a whole, though many drew solace from the fact that small evangelical groups were being raised up within several of the denominations.

Though theological discussion revealed no clear trend during the mid-1960s, the ecclesiastical trend was only too clear. The spokesmen

for the leading denominations seemed unable to move quickly enough in placing themselves in the vanguard of political and social revolution. The National and World Councils issued an unending series of proclamations on every conceivable question, inevitably taking a non-conservative position. The deep social division of the country was reflected in the life of the church, where in many cases the clerical leadership found itself opposed by the lay membership. The war in Vietnam became the most bitter controversial question of the decade, and it often divided evangelical from non-evangelical clergymen. Billy Graham nominally took no position on the political questions involved, but his public statements reveal consistent support of the military endeavor. Most evangelicals were more vocal than he in support of the war effort. At the same time, evangelical cooperation with non-orthodox churchmen who opposed the war exposed the new evangelicals to charges by the fundamentalists that they were not seriously patriotic. The evangelicals often gave excuse for these charges in their enthusiasm for the terminology of the revolutionaries. Many evangelicals adopted the slogans of the protesters and especially framed their appeal to young people in a manner calculated to resemble that of the dissident groups. Their hair and clothing styles emphasized their desire to embrace the youth culture, though this desire involved them in considerable ambiguity. Most evangelicals managed to survive the stormy decade without resorting to the isolation which the fundamentalists never left. In greater or lesser amount they were influenced by the radicalism of the period. Many evangelicals retreated from separatism in personal conduct to the extent that the appearance, music, and recreational styles of the

secular youth culture were adopted totally. Often, only discouragement of the ultimate act of physical intimacy between unmarried persons remained of the considerable edifice which had been the fundamentalist doctrine of personal separation from the world.

Evangelicalism continued to prosper during the decade and began to merge with the growing charismatic movement. The relationship between these two movements is beyond the scope of this study, but the extent to which the two actually merge will be one of the most important religious questions of the present time. As the broad Protestant church became more and more radical, evangelicals again examined the possibilities for explicitly evangelical cooperation. The mammoth Congress on Evangelism held in Berlin during 1966 suggested the direction which such examination may lead. Directed by Billy Graham and Dr. Carl Henry, the meeting aspired to be a world conference of evangelicals and to a considerable extent fulfilled that aspiration. The Christian Century has several times expressed concern that this evangelical ecumenism might well become a serious competitor to broader ecumenism.¹ That this is a real possibility is indicated by the continued enthusiasm within the National Association of Evangelicals for ecumenism among evangelicals. During 1962 there was much discussion within the NAE of the dangers posed by indiscriminate evangelical affiliation with church council organizations. Unsuccessful efforts from within that organization were made to convince Billy Graham to exercise greater care in his relations with non-evangelical institutions and individuals. Referring

to evangelical fellowships among those involved in missions, one NAE source wrote: "They would be the means of promoting a positive, evangelical program among missions of like precious faith and give the nationals something of a tangible nature to show what we mean by the differences which exist between evangelicals and liberals. Such a fellowship would also be a deterrent to further infiltration and regulatory measures that might otherwise be initiated by the affiliates of the WCC."² These comments reflected the continuing suspicion with which many evangelicals viewed the activities of the National and World Councils. As traditional evangelicals and pentecostals have moved closer together, symbolized by the much-publicized mutual admiration of Graham and Oral Roberts, the establishment of a broad evangelical ecumenism with some form of organizational expression has seemed ever more likely. The wide influence of the charismatic movement in the mainline denominations introduced another factor which will affect the shape of any evangelical alliance.

Whatever direction evangelicalism moves, it is clear today that the hopes of the new evangelicals that orthodoxy might be restored to a dominant position within the major churches have not been fulfilled. Orthodoxy has become respectable again, and evangelical theologians are treated with a grudging respect, but the major Protestant institutions remain unmoved by the new evangelical assault. The activities of evangelicals continue to receive their primary inspiration from interdenominational evangelical sources or from explicitly evangelical organizations within denominations. The denominations continue to be suspicious of the activities of evangelicals. At the same time

evangelicals have been influenced by their contacts with non-evangelical clergymen. Fundamentalists charge that this influence has been extensive. Many evangelicals deny that there has been any such influence. A careful study is needed to examine the extent to which current evangelicalism has weakened its fundamentalist theological foundations and the changes which have come in its ethical, social, and political philosophy.

Evangelicalism has provided itself with very attractive packaging. It has adopted enough social philosophy to claim to be "enlightened," while it continues to pay homage to values which many Americans wish they could still observe. The movement makes a tremendous effort toward enlisting young people, insisting that one can be a good Christian and still not be a "square." Above all, the movement still has Billy Graham, one of the most widely popular men in American history. Determined liberal opposition to Graham has all but ceased. Even the Christian Century finds favorable observations to make concerning the evangelist. The bitterness which that journal expressed toward Graham because of his veiled endorsement of the Vietnam War ended with the end of American involvement in that struggle. Among secular Americans Graham is always listed as one of the most popular men in the country, and media criticism of him is rare. Two recent authors based their discussion of the 1972 national election on the symbolism of Billy Graham as a spokesman for middle America.³ Whatever direction evangelicalism is moving, no one can doubt that Billy Graham continues to be its foremost spokesman.

In strong contrast to the record of evangelicalism, the history of fundamentalism since 1960 has been one of deepening isolation. While

most new evangelical spokesmen looked, after 1960, toward their relationship with the church beyond conservatism, fundamentalists narrowed their concern to an ever smaller section of conservative orthodoxy. By 1960 evangelicalism had been clearly distinguished from fundamentalism, and most evangelical authors turned to other topics. Criticism of evangelicalism continues even today to be a major fundamentalist activity. A considerable body of literature has been developed which explicates the doctrine of separation from the fundamentalist perspective with the alterations made by the new evangelicals specifically in mind. While fundamentalists continue to be aggressively evangelistic and most fundamentalist groups are growing at a rapid rate, they control only a very small segment of American Protestantism.

The shift away from conservatism which came in America after 1960 reinforced the fundamentalist sense of alienation. The violent social strife of the past decade greatly intensified the apocalyptic elements in fundamentalist thinking and brought those politically oriented fundamentalist leaders, such as Carl McIntire, once again into the national spotlight. While the attention of the public was occasionally focused upon fundamentalists who engaged in demonstrations concerning secular issues, most fundamentalist leaders worked in obscurity. Rarely today do the national media take any notice of the specifically religious efforts of the separatist fundamentalists.

Though fundamentalism has ceased to command national attention, the movement continues to demonstrate considerable strength. Especially among fundamentalist Baptists, the development in the last fifteen years of the concept of the very large, super-aggressive local church

promises to bring spectacular growth during the next years. It is not uncommon for fundamentalist churches today to have several thousand members. Each year Christian Life magazine lists the largest 100 churches in America, and each year the great majority are fundamentalist churches. Nine of the ten largest churches in America are independent fundamentalist churches.⁴ With over 5,000 students, Bob Jones University is the largest non-denominational Christian college in America, and many new fundamentalist colleges have been started in recent years. At the present time, fundamentalism continues to display considerable energy and continues to experience numerical growth.

Fundamentalism also continues to resist vigorously the tendency to soften its doctrinal and moral distinctives. The dispute with the new evangelicals has sharpened the fundamentalist's awareness of his differentness and has renewed his commitment to separation. Every exposure of change in the position of some new evangelical leader is taken as evidence of the certain deterioration which comes with failure to observe doctrinal and moral separation. While the new evangelicals widened the circle of fellowship to include many who were far from evangelical, the fundamentalists narrowed it to exclude those who were evangelical but not separatists. While many evangelicals adopted the styles of the secular world in an attempt to escape the stigma of differentness, fundamentalists condemned the new styles as symbolic of rebellion against authority. Many evangelicals complained loudly about past efforts to construct and impose objective standards of behavior in Christian circles, but fundamentalists generally turned to the task feeling renewed urgency because of the sweeping changes which began

during the sixties. The catalogue of one fundamentalist college which opened its doors in 1971 expressed the determination to resist conformity to these changes:

Lynchburg Baptist College believes that Christians should manifest loyalty to the Lord Jesus Christ in every area of their lives. Students will not engage in gambling, dancing, profanity, or attendance at motion-picture theaters. Students will refrain from the use of tobacco, alcohol, and drugs. Students are expected generally to avoid anything which tends to identify them in their own, or someone else's mind, with the youth counter-culture of modern society.

Men are not to have long hair, beards, or mustaches. This regulation means that sideburns may not be longer than the bottom of the earlobe, and that hair may not come down over the top of the ear or touch the back of the collar. Students must come to meals, classes, and chapel properly dressed. For men, shirts and ties are worn. Modesty is the rule which governs the dress of young women.⁵

That this college enrolled over 800 students in its third year suggests the continuing appeal of fundamentalism. That the church services of the Thomas Road Baptist Church of Lynchburg, Virginia, are broadcast over television throughout the United States suggests the continuing energy of fundamentalists in evangelization. The Thomas Road Baptist Church has grown from a beginning in 1956 to an average weekly attendance of over 7,000. Elmer Towns has recorded the recent growth of many fundamentalist churches which parallel that of Thomas Road.⁶ Though fundamentalism no longer exerts measurable influence upon the dominant national culture, it continues to be a determinative influence in the lives of millions of Americans. The severe social discord of the sixties and the radicalism of the national mood reinforced the isolationism of the movement and generally served to render the influence of the movement upon its followers even more dominant.

From the beginnings of the National Association of Evangelicals, there was ambiguity in the attitude which it would take toward those outside the conservative camp. The abrasive opposition which Carl McIntire and the American Council of Christian Churches offered to liberal and non-evangelical churchmen would not be copied by the men of the NAE. At the same time the early leaders of the National Association of Evangelicals formed the organization with the specific intent of challenging liberal control of religious life in America. During the decade of the forties, the attitude of the NAE, and of most conservative evangelicals, toward non-orthodox religious spokesmen remained one of hostility. Fundamentalists and evangelicals cooperated within the National Association of Evangelicals, and despite the competition between that group and the American Council of Christian Churches, it remained possible to describe a conservative-evangelical camp roughly as "those who were in fellowship with Moody Bible Institute." However much or little emphasis they might place on doctrinal or moral separation, all within this camp worked in relative isolation from the main-line denominations and without any attention from the national media. Toward the end of the decade, renewed interest in fundamentalist evangelistic activity prompted hope that a conservative swing in the nation might restore some of the influence which orthodoxy had once possessed. The emergence of Billy Graham as a nationally recognized evangelist and the increasing willingness of non-orthodox groups to participate in his evangelistic activities forced upon the conservatives a re-evaluation of their isolated position.

During the same years, voices were being raised from within conservatism which called for significant alterations in the traditional

fundamentalist stance. Carl Henry, Harold Ockenga, Bernard Ramm, Vernon Grounds, Edward Carnell, and Donald Barnhouse were among the men pressing for a reformation of fundamentalism. During 1955 and 1956 the tension became severe in the conservative-evangelical camp. These "new evangelicals" made broad challenges to long-accepted elements of the fundamentalist ideology and claimed Billy Graham as a spokesman for their position. Fundamentalist leaders such as Bob Jones and John R. Rice condemned the new position as a betrayal of the faith and continued to see in Graham a possible champion in a renewed frontal attack upon modernist domination of American religion. During 1956 Graham identified himself fully with the new evangelical group, and in October of that year Christianity Today appeared, becoming the chief spokesman for the new position. In 1957 the New York crusade brought a final division between Graham and new evangelicals and the fundamentalists. For the New York campaign Graham sought and won the endorsement of the major Protestant organizations and from that time on worked more and more under the auspices of the established churches. Most conservatives followed Graham, though expressing strong reservations about most elements of the new evangelical program. Within the evangelical group, emphasis was no longer placed upon separation, and the young people under the supervision of the evangelicals entered the turbulent sixties with the leadership of their elders often impaired by ambivalence. Despite much talk concerning the need for a broader fellowship, most within the evangelical group continued to work with non-evangelicals only within the context of a Graham-type crusade.

The influence of evangelicals within the major denominations continues to be negligible. The Congress on Evangelism of 1966 probably points toward greater ecumenism within evangelical ranks, and this will probably drain much of the remaining enthusiasm for ecumenism with the broader church. The element in the situation which is least predictable at this point is the impact which the charismatic movement will have on evangelical Christianity. It is possible that evangelicalism may be so influenced by its affiliation with the charismatics that it will undergo deep alterations. While this may restore some of the emphases of fundamentalism, institutionally it will lead evangelicalism even further from fundamentalism.

Fundamentalists emerged from the struggle with Graham in almost total isolation. Resolutely conservative, they faced the decade of the sixties with a thoroughly consistent, if extreme, viewpoint which was rendered more extreme by the events of the decade. While most fundamentalists realistically abandoned any hope of influence upon national life, some pursued political programs led by men such as Carl McIntire. Most fundamentalist leaders turned to explicitly religious concerns, only occasionally becoming involved with the total community on some matter of general local interest. Above all else, fundamentalists turned to the task of building churches. The past fifteen years have witnessed dramatic proof of the vitality of the fundamentalist message in the contemporary world. Several fundamentalist denominations and literally thousands of large fundamentalist churches have been built since the Second World War. Bob Jones University moved to Greenville, South Carolina in 1948 and has continued in that location to prosper,

today enrolling 5,000 students on a well furnished campus. Numerous fundamentalist colleges have been started, and several, including Tennessee Temple in Chattanooga and Baptist Bible College in Springfield, Missouri, have grown to considerable size. The most spectacular growth has been within the Baptist Bible Fellowship. Formed from a group of churches which had their origins in the ministry of J. Frank Norris, the fellowship began in 1950 and today reports well over one million members.⁷ Fundamentalism has never solved the problem of internal dispute, and probably never will, but oftentimes the tendency to divide has been a promoter of growth. Whereas division has sometimes resulted in weakness, it has at other times resulted in purification and a renewal of energy. While no one today predicts the imminent emergence of organized fundamentalism as an influential element in American Protestantism, neither would anyone predict the imminent disappearance of fundamentalism.

NOTES

CHAPTER 16

¹Christian Century, March 2, 1966, LXXXVIII, 264.

²Milton Baker, "Cooperation," discussion paper of National Association of Evangelicals Mission group, distributed privately, April, 1962.

³Lowell Streiker and Gerald Strober, Religion and the New Majority (New York: Association Press, 1972).

⁴Elmer Towns, Is the Day of the Denomination Dead? (Nashville, Tenn.: Thomas Nelson Inc., 1973), p. 26.

⁵Lynchburg Baptist College, Catalogue 1973-74 (Lynchburg, Va.), p. 26.

⁶Elmer Towns, America's Fastest Growing Churches (Nashville, Tenn.: Impact Books, 1972); The Ten Largest Sunday Schools (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House, 1969); Is the Day of the Denomination Dead?

⁷George W. Dollar, A History of Fundamentalism in America (Greenville, S.C.: Bob Jones University Press, 1973), p. 219.

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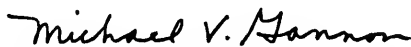
Clyde Taylor, Co-Director, National Association of Evangelicals, August, 1973, in Washington, D.C.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Farley P. Butler, Jr., was born November 21, 1946, in Gainesville, Florida. During childhood he lived in various parts of the United States and in France, as his father was an officer in the Army. After graduating from Gainesville High School in 1964, he attended Central Florida Junior (Community) College in Ocala, enrolled in the law enforcement program. He received the degree of Bachelor of Arts with a major in religion from Bob Jones University, Greenville, South Carolina, and the degree of Master of Arts in Teaching with a major in history from Converse College, Spartanburg, South Carolina. He completed the course work for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Florida in June, 1972, receiving the degree in 1976.

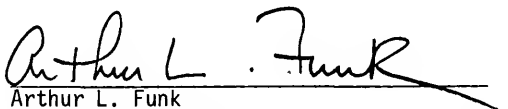
He is married to the former Patricia Anne Morton, and they have one son. He taught at the secondary level at Tabernacle Christian School, Greenville, South Carolina, and served as Registrar and Chairman of the Division of Social Sciences at Lynchburg Baptist College (now Liberty Baptist College) in Lynchburg, Virginia. Since October, 1973, he has been employed as a police officer for the City of Gainesville.

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.



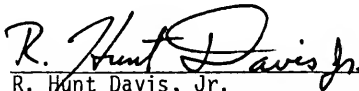
Michael V. Gannon, Chairman
Professor of History

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Arthur L. Funk
Professor of History

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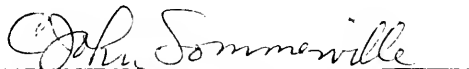
R. Hunt Davis, Jr.
Assistant Professor of History

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Delton L. Scudder
Professor of Religion

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "C. John Sommerville". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

C. John Sommerville
Assistant Professor of History

This dissertation was submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the Department of History in the College of Arts and Sciences and to the Graduate Council, and was accepted as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

March, 1976

Dean, Graduate School

